

FRONTISPICE.

Vol. I.



C.W.B. del.

C.C. Sc.

FRONTISPICE.

Vol. I.



C.W.B. del.

C.C. Sc.

C O L U M E L L A;
κ
OR, THE

DISTRESSED ANCHORET.

A

COLLOQUIAL TALE.

By the EDITOR of the SPIRITUAL QUIXOTE.

V O L. I.

*Spurinna, quoad honestum fuit, obiit officia; multo-
que labore hoc otium meruit.*

Plin. L. iii. Ep. 1.

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR J. DODSLEY, PALL-MALL.

M.DCC.LXXIX.

COLLECTED

BY JOHN

DISCOVERED AND CHORISTER

BY JOHN GOLIATH



~~you must expect fail last~~

~~to have a balloon~~

~~and being as you~~

~~edit~~ A C A R D,

~~and Belisario~~

~~too to follow~~ A - L A - M O D E R N E.

THE Editor presents his
compliments to the
Rev. Dr. Demure, his good
Lady, and Miss Sophy; hopes
they are well.

As the principal subject of
the following Narrative is a

real fact, he begs that it may not be called a *Novel*, or a *Romance*, by the good Doctor and his friends ; who, he knows, are professed enemies to that species of composition.

COLU-

COLUMELLA, &c.

CHAP. I.

The INTRODUCTION.

THAT ease and tranquillity which usually attend a retired country life, strongly recommend it to people of the greatest sensibility and delicacy of taste. Those who are struggling amidst the tumults and disquietudes almost inseparable from a public station, or a busy life, look forward with ardent wishes to-

wards a calm retreat, as to “ the
“ haven where they long to be;”
and to which, after having spent the
best part of their days in a diligent
discharge of the duties they owe to
society, every one has a right to
aspire. The greatest and the wisest
men of antiquity, heroes, statesmen,
orators, and philosophers, after hav-
ing served their country in the
camp, the senate, or the forum, have
embraced with rapture this refuge
of their old age: and we yet con-
template with pleasure and venera-
tion their Tusculums, their Linter-
nums, and their Sabine farms. Even
the primitive Anchorets, who were
forced to fly from the merciless at-
tacks of persecution, into solitudes
and desarts, have been imitated with
a romantic kind of enthusiasm, by

the

the religious orders in the Romish church : and cells and hermitages have been the voluntary retreats of illustrious commanders, eminent statesmen, and even of the greatest princes in the Christian world.

But when a young person, after having been prepared by a liberal education, and a long and regular course of studies, for some learned or ingenious profession, and qualified to be useful to the world in some eminent station ; when such a one retires, in the vigour of life, through mere indolence and love of ease, and spends his days in solitude and inactivity ; or even in those meaner occupations which persons of inferior abilities and unimproved talents might with equal, or perhaps with superior skill, discharge :

B 2 such

such a one, I say, not only robs the community of an useful member in a more elevated sphere ; but probably lays the foundation of his own infelicity : for he will not only find himself unqualified to enjoy that retirement of which he had formed such romantic ideas ; but the consciousness of having deserted his proper station in society (which perhaps he may see filled by some former rival of inferior abilities) and the reflection on his misapplied talents, will probably be a continual source of dissatisfaction and remorse.

The disappointment and unhappiness then, which too frequently attend this prevailing love of ease and retirement ; this desertion of our duty, before we have performed

any

any thing to merit a discharge from the public service, are the subject of the following authentic Narration *.

C H A P. II.

GOING to London in the post-coach from Bath, towards the end of the last autumnal season, I had for my companions, a reverend Divine (a Canon of a neighbouring church) and a Kentish Esquire;

* Even Paul of Thebais, the father of the Anchorets, seems to have indulged a culpable fondness for solitude and repose: and though he may be justifiable in flying from the persecution under Decius, (whatever Mr. G-bb-n may think) racks and impalements were severer trials than the negative discouragements which our modern separatists complain of, yet he sequestered himself from society much longer than was necessary; when his precepts and example might have been of great service to the infant church.

who, I found, had formerly been acquainted in the University; but had not seen each other for some years, till they accidentally met on this occasion.

When we were all seated, and the coachman had taken his dram, and we were now got clear of the town; having also given each his opinion of the weather, and settled with great precision the state of the air, and other matters of general concern:

“Our old Oxford acquaintance Columella,” says the Canon, “is in a deplorable condition.” “Whom do you mean?” replies the Kentish gentleman.

“Why, don’t you remember our romantic friend, Cornelius Milward,” resumes the Canon, “who was al-

ways

ways talking of Virgil's Georgics, Cowley, and Columella? and, partly for the sake of the jingle, I suppose, and partly on account of the subject of that * author's book on Agriculture, acquired the nick-name of Columella."

" Oh! I recollect him perfectly well," says the Kentish man, " but have not heard his name since I left college; which, I believe, is now near twenty years ago. He was one of the junto; Atkins, Herton, and Corry Milward. But pray what is become of him, and what has brought him into this deplorable condition? He was a man of some fortune, I think, though not enough, I suppose, to maintain him without a profession."

* Columella *de re rustica*.

8 COLUMELLA; or,

“Why,” says the Canon, “the very circumstance you now mention, I believe, has been the chief cause of poor Corry Milward’s infelicity. He had a small family estate; which would have been a good foundation for a genteel profession: but, instead of making that use of it, he considered it as a sufficient competence, and retired immediately from college to the solitude and inactivity of a country life; and is now become a prey to low spirits, spleen, and, I am afraid, an incurable melancholy.”

“He was a good scholar, and a man of parts, I believe,” says the Esquire.

“Yes, and for that reason his misfortune is the more to be regretted,” replies the Canon. “Mr. Milward,”

Milward," continues he, " is so remarkable an instance of the impropriety of leaving young people to chuse their own plan of life, and of the improbability of *their* finding happiness in the indolence and obscurity of retirement, who are qualified to shine in a more conspicuous sphere, that I have actually been drawing up (as an amusement on my journey) a narrative of his case; principally for the use of a young relation, whose education I have much at heart; and who is in a situation and circumstances somewhat similiar to those of poor Corry Milward."

Here the Canon, fixing his eyes upon me, proceeded with a smile: "This gentleman," says he, " is a stranger; but I have no notion of

10 **COLUMELLA; or,**

making a mystery of trifles ; and, as it will perhaps amuse you upon the road, if you will give me leave, I will read my narrative as we go on.

“ This account,” continues he, “ was part of it communicated to me by his two friends Dr. Atkins and Counsellor Horton, who made their friend Mr. Milward a visit some years ago : the other part is what I myself was witness to, or have since heard from people in the neighbourhood, of his present unhappy situation. I have drawn it up in form of a modern tale ; and to tempt my pupil to read it, have introduced a short story or two which they told me, tending to illustrate the same moral, “ *That an active life is generally attended with more happiness than an indolent or retired one.* ” On our expressing an

inclination to hear the Canon's account of their old friend, he pulled out a thick manuscript from his bosom ; and, after bespeaking our indulgence for any inaccuracies (as the greater part of it had been written at an inn upon the road) he thus began—

C H A P. III.

THREE gentlemen, whom I shall call Atticus, Hortensius, and Columella (for so they stiled each other in their juvenile correspondence) had been intimately acquainted from the earliest part of their lives. A similarity of taste and genius made them constant partners in their puerile amusements at the same public school ; and being inseparable companions in the

University, they acquired the appellation of the Triumvirate and the Junto. Their vacant hours each day were spent in conversing and walking together; as their evenings were, either in conferring about their studies, or in reading some modern poem, a play, or a paper in the Spectator or the Rambler; or in very sober and philosophical compositions.

Atticus and Hortensius, indeed, pursued a regular course of studies with unvaried diligence and assiduity. But Columella having, after the first year, indulged himself in a more vague and desultory way of reading, soon became disgusted with systems of every kind; and deviated into the more enchanting regions of poetry and romance. The epic and dramatic,

matic, but more particularly the pastoral and descriptive poets were his favourite authors ; and he soon became less fond of Newton and Locke, than of Pope and Milton, Spenser and Thompson, Fontenelle, Le Sage, and Cervantes, and other writers of taste, humour, or imagination. Columella, indeed, continued at the University till his two colleagues had taken their degrees ; Atticus in arts, and Hortensius in law : but not having qualified himself for any profession, and being now of age, and freed from the authority of his guardians (for he had lost his parents in his infancy) he retired at length into the country ; and having a small hereditary estate, sufficient, with care and frugality, just to support the appearance of a gentleman,

gentleman, his indolence got the better of his ambition (or rather of his prudence) and he sat down contented with the slender fortune acquired him by his ancestors.

Hortensius, who had been some years entered at the Temple, went now to reside there; and having laid a good foundation of classical learning, and a general knowledge of the sciences, by a close application to the study of the law, a young man of his good parts could not avoid distinguishing himself very soon in his profession.

Atticus, according to the excellent plan long established in our Universities, had likewise applied assiduously for the four first years to * logic, geometry, natural and moral

* Logic is so necessary even for the understanding

ral philosophy ; and after that con-
fining himself particularly to the
study of divinity, he became a ce-
lebrated preacher in the University ;
an ingenious and diligent tutor in
his own college ; and being of a
considerable family, and some inde-
pendent fortune, as well as a man
of great discretion, and an amiable
temper, he was unanimously cho-
sen, by the time he was thirty, the
Head of a very respectable and learn-
ed society : in which station his be-
haviour being equally free from a
pedantic haughtiness, and too easy
and submissive a condescension, he
gained both the love and esteem of
his college ; and the harmony that

standing several authors, that I am surprised to
find a very sensible Scotch writer speak slight-
ingly of its utility.

subfisted

subsisted between them constituted their mutual felicity.

C H A P. IV.

SOME years had now elapsed since the three friends, Hortensius, Atticus, and Columella, had met together: they kept up, however, occasionally, some kind of literary correspondence; and both Atticus and Hortensius had frequently received letters from Columella, filled with romantic accounts of the happiness and tranquillity he enjoyed in his rural retreat; and with florid descriptions of the Arcadian scenes which he had discovered and embellished round the habitation of his tasteless ancestors. He owned, indeed, that he lived quite the life

of an hermit, or anchoret: that he was not idle, however, but enjoyed a proper mixture of the active and the contemplative life; sometimes reading, and sometimes working in his garden; and that he diversified his solitude by the variety of his studies, and the constant amusement which he found in improving and adorning his place.

His two friends, though sufficiently happy in their several pursuits, could hardly forbear envying their old acquaintance his less fatiguing and less exposed situation; and had frequently projected a tour into the West of England, where Columella was situated, to make him a visit; but something or other had constantly intervened, and prevented its execution.

It

It was now, however, the season of the year when the business of the senate and of the bar was suspended for the vaeation; and even the professed votaries of pleasure, fatigued with a repetition of the same scenes of gaiety and dissipation, being compelled to seek for some variety in the blooming charms of nature as displayed in the country, the metropolis of course became entirely deserted.

Hortensius, therefore, having previously fixed the plan by letter with Atticus, had now joined him at Oxford; and they at length set out on their western tour; the principal object of which being to visit their old friend Columella in his retirement; they intending only to take a cursory view of the country and of

of the noblemen's seats that fell in their way, and not to make any stay at any place of public resort, a light portmanteau and one servant was deemed a sufficient equipage for their journey.

As people who stir but seldom from home are stricken with objects that pass unnoticed by those who are more accustomed to travelling; and as Atticus and Hortensius (who called upon me after they left Columella) mentioned several particulars of their journey, and other incidents which might have been omitted; partly to save the trouble of retrenching, and partly as I then thought them somewhat amusing; I shall attend them regularly from stage to stage, as they related their tour to me; and particularly men-

tion

C H A P. V.

EARLY in the morning then, about the middle of July, our travellers set out on their expedition. As an innocent relaxation from the fatigues of business was one subordinate end of their journey, they had determined to banish every anxious thought, and to leave every severer care behind them. Atticus was no longer the solemn Head of a college, nor Hortensius the sage Counsel learned in the law. The consciousness however of having punctually discharged every duty of their respective stations, diffused an ease and

and cheerfulness over their minds, and left them open to enjoyment, and at leisure to receive amusement from every object that presented itself in their way. The freshness of the morning, the serenity of the air, the verdure of the fields, every gentleman's seat, every farm-house, and every cottage they passed by, or every village they rode through, afforded some kind of pleasing reflections to persons of their happy disposition. In short, never was Milton's beautiful simile more truly exemplified than in our joyous travellers Atticus and Hortensius :

“ As one who long in populous cities pent
Forth issuing on a summer's morn to breathe
Amidst the pleasant villages and farms,
From each thing seen conceives delight” —

Thus if they overtook or were
overtaken

overtaken by any one on the road, even of the lowest rank, instead of passing by him with a supercilious air, as if he were of a different species, they considered him in the same light as a sportsman would a partridge or a woodcock; as one that might afford them either pleasure or instruction; and usually commenced a conversation.

When they came to an inn, instead of complaining of their accommodations, or bullying the waiters, they diverted themselves with the humours of my landlord; criticising his taste in his furniture or his pictures; or in perusing the inscriptions on the walls or windows; or enquiring into the history of the neighbouring gentry. In short, they had determined to be pleased with every thing,

thing, and therefore were not disappointed.

At the inn where they breakfasted, the great patriot John Wilkes had usurped the principal place over the parlour chimney. Where they stopped to dine, the virtuous George III. and the amiable Charlotte had resumed their places in the dining-room; and Wilkes was only stuck up against the stable-door, and in the temple of Cloacina.

When they came to their stage in the evening, they found mine hostess, who was an handsome widow, reading Nelson's Devotions in the bar: she just paid her compliments to her guests, and then resumed her meditations. Upon enquiring into the probable cause of so unusual a phænomenon (of a barber who attended

tended them) they discovered that their inn, which was the most magnificent, and had been the best frequented hôtel upon the road, was now, and had been ever since the last election, upon the decline; being rivalled by another inn a few doors beyond it. In the truth of this account they were confirmed; when, in the midst of her devout reverie, they saw my landlady suddenly start up, ring the bar-bell, and bid the drawer observe, whether a post-coach and four, which passed by, stopped at the White Hart or not? This incident sufficiently betrayed the true cause of the poor woman's uncommon, or rather unseasonable fit of devotion.

While their supper was preparing, they had time to examine a variety of

of inscriptions on the walls and windows of this ancient hôtel: where they could not but remark, that the love of women, the love of wine, and the love of fame, were the three ruling passions that usually vented themselves in these extempore effusions at our inns upon the road.

“ James Harding, from Birmingham, dined here Sept. 29, 1763.”

“ Button-maker by trade,”

adds a rival for fame; who, however, more modest in his pretensions, signs only the initials of his name to his witty conceit.

“ No care but love disturbs my peaceful breast;

“ Love! of all cares, the sweetest and the best!”

says an amorous nymph, in an Italian hand,

“ Did love, like agues, ever intermit,

“ How should we blush in absence of the fit!”

replies some heart of oak, invulnerable by the soft darts of Cupid.

“ The divine Sally Johnson!”
says a sighing inamorato;

“ Grace was in all her steps; heaven in her eye;
“ In every gesture, dignity and love!”

“ Sally Johnson is as great a wh-re as
ever p-ss-d,”

says some honest votary of Bacchus;
who d-mins all whining and attempts
at wit; and drinks a bumper to all
jolly fellows, and confusion to all
order and decorum.

“ Thou fool! this night shall thy soul be
required of thee,”

subjoins a fair devotee; who, though
shocked now and then with a little
ribaldry in her researches, cannot in
conscience omit reading, whatever she
sees written upon the walls or win-
dows

dows of her inn; in order to write an antidote to the poison so frequently contained in those inscriptions.

C H A P. VI.

OUR travellers were joined the next morning by a gentleman-like man, well mounted; though without a servant, his dress and accoutrements, and whole appearance, had an air of wealth and consequence.

After a little introductory chat on the fineness of the season, the dustiness of the roads, and the like, they soon fell upon political affairs, and the reigning topics of conversation at that time: upon all which the stranger talked with great fluency,

and seemed to have made himself quite master of every particular of the late war; the advantages and disadvantages of the peace, which had been lately concluded: and as it was soon after the taking Mr. Wilkes into custody, and seizing his papers, he had much to say upon the liberty of the subject, upon general warrants, magna charta, the bill of rights, and the like popular topics.

In the midst of his harangue, the stranger's horse tripping, threw his rider almost upon his neck, and discovered a neat pair of saddle-bags, which he had hitherto taken pains, by the spreading of his coat, to conceal. Though this little accident seemed to disconcert our politician, Atticus and Hortensius had too much sense to value their companion at all

the less, for travelling in a manner suitable to his probable station in life. Yet, as it somewhat lowered the idea they had conceived of his learning and political abilities from his conversation, Hortensius had now an inclination to fathom the depth of the orator's erudition. With a feigned ignorance therefore, he said, he had heard a great deal lately of magna charta and the bill of rights, but wondered in what reign they had their original. "In what reign?" cried the traveller, "I cannot immediately recollect, but I fancy it was in the time of our Saxon kings."

Finding himself not contradicted, "Yes," continues he, "I remember now; the bill of rights was presented to William the Conqueror, upon his first landing in *Scotland*; and mag-

na charta—(let me consider)—yes, magna charta was granted by Old Noll, in Queen Bess's days.—But gentlemen,” says the politician, by way of turning the discourse, “ where do you buy your rum?”

They now discovered, that this Machiavel in politics, this great patron of liberty, and the assertor of the bill of rights, was nothing more or less than an out-rider to a brandy-merchant, and his master a common-council man in the city of London: but that, by constantly reading the news-papers in their punch-room, and conversing at coffee-houses, he had gained a superficial knowledge of what was going on in the world; and could harangue, upon a few trite subjects, with a fluency which would quite eclipse many a man

a man of deep erudition and a learned education: but take him back even fifty years from the present times, and he was as much at a loss as a stranger in a foreign country. And this seems to be the case with nine out of ten of those great legislators and state-reformers; who, over their pot of coffee, or their pot of porter, take upon them so freely to censure the measures of government, and to new-model our excellent constitution.

Their fellow-traveller now stopping at a little ale-house that stood a little out of the road, to get an order, Atticus and Hortensius were deprived of any further conversation with the patriotic brandy-merchant.

C 4 CHAP.

C H A P. VII.

THE two travellers not making very long stages, usually came pretty early to the end of their day's journey. They lay the second night at a newly-built inn, which my landlord had furnished with the old-fashioned goods, and many of the family pictures, of a neighbouring gentleman; whose zeal for the public had made him too negligent of his own private affairs, and had obliged him to part with an old hereditary estate, and even his mansion-house and furniture, for the benefit of his creditors. Mine host had adorned his best parlour with some modern portraits, with the illustrious physiognomy of the 'Squire himself

himself in his scarlet coat and flaxen periwig, and his lady in her loose wrapping-gown, and her gorgon locks twisting over her snowy, or rather her chalky bosom, in gilt or lacquered frames. But he had thrust half a dozen old pictures, either in black frames or in no frames at all, into an open sort of gallery, where they dried their linen: two of these Atticus purchased for five shillings a-piece; one a fine head by Cornelius Johnson, the other by Sir Peter Lely: the former of which he got packed up and sent as a present to his friend Mr. W—d, of Middlesex; where the reader who has the curiosity may now see it, as no small ornament to one of that gentleman's best apartments.

These trifling particulars of their

journey, though foreign to the end proposed by it, (that of visiting their old friend in his retirement) I have recited, says the Canon, to shew what small matters, as I observed, may serve for amusements to minds vacant to enjoyment; not bigotted to any system of political principles, or taken up with guilty pursuits, or too anxious about things not essential to happiness.

People of unhappy tempers, or soured by party zeal, might have found matter of vexation instead of mirth, at seeing Mr. Wilkes's countenance honoured with the principal place in the parlour at one inn, or degraded to the stable-door at another: or might have been provoked, instead of diverted, at the impertinence of a patriotic out-rider,

or

or journeyman politician : but people that make the best of every incident, and are disposed to be pleased, may extract pleasure from those circumstances which would give pain to persons of less philosophical tempers, and make themselves happy in almost any situation.

“ For good belongs to every state of life,
“ And every season has peculiar sweets ;
“ Or more or less ; which he, who can extract
“ And feed upon, has learnt the art to live.”

Incerti Authoris.

C H A P. VIII.

HORTENSIO and Atticus might have reached Columela's habitation on the third day by dinner-time ; but as they had not informed him of the very day on

which he might expect them, two gentlemen and a servant, they imagined, coming unexpectedly, might be an inconvenient addition to a small family in the country: they therefore stopped at an inn about three miles short of their friend's house, to refresh themselves, and proceed to their journey's end early in the afternoon.

Dinner being announced, and my landlord bringing up the first dish, Atticus (according to a prudent custom, where so much poison is administered under the name of Port-wine) bid Boniface help himself to a bumper; and, whilst he was drinking it, enquired, amongst other things, whether he knew one Mr. Cornelius Milward, in that neighbourhood? "I cannot say I am

am much acquainted with the gentleman," replies mine host (stopping in the midst of his draught, and holding up his glass to shew the brightness of his liquor) " though," says he, " Mr. Milward has been once or twice at my house; and I offered to call upon him, and take a day's shooting with him, or shew him a hare now and then, or the like: but I believe the gentleman is a little *malancolly*," continues my landlord; " and," pointing to his own forehead, with an arch leer, " I am afraid all is not right in the attic story—Howsomever," continues he, perceiving Atticus and Hortensius smiling upon each other, " I believe the gentleman is a very honest gentleman for that matter—come, we'll drink his health, if you please, Sir."

Mine

Mine host having emptied his glass, Hortensius observed, that Mr. Milward sure must be but an odd sort of a man.

"Why, to be sure," continues Boniface, "there was a comical affair happened therelately." "What was that?" cries Atticus, with some quickness. "Why," replies my landlord, "it was a comical fancy to be sure; but Mr. Milward was actually taken up for sheep-stealing." "What do you mean?" says Hortensius, with a stern air.— "Nay, Sir," says Boniface, "I only tell you the matter of fact: you must know, Sir, there's a surly kind of a farmer in the parish, who during the winter had had several sheep stolen out of the fold; some killed and cut up and the offal left behind; and some carried entirely away. In short,

short, the farmer thought proper to keep a constant watch for several nights: and as Mr. Milward, I find, loves to walk by moon-light, and muse and study in a *solitary* way, as a body may say, he was walking pretty late one night by a wood-side, near which the sheep were folded; and as the farmer's men who kept watch had hardly ever seen Mr. Milward (who seldom goes out of his own fields by day-light) they seized him without any more ceremony: and as he generally walks with one of those canes which have a spike darting out of them with a spring, they thought that a suspicious circumstance, and actually carried Mr. Milward before a justice; who, however, had more sense than

to

to commit a gentleman upon so slight an evidence."

Though Atticus and Hortensius were diverted with this ludicrous accident which had befallen their old friend; yet they were a little chagrined to reflect, how much it must hurt Columella's delicacy; and also to find, that he should have so odd a character in the neighbourhood. They did not discover to my landlord, however, how much they were interested in this adventure; but only enquired how far Mr. Milward lived from thence; he replied about three miles; and in the volubility of his impertinence, was proceeding to tell them, that it was a *sad lonesome* place, that there was no road near it, and no neighbours, and

and nothing to be seen but woods and rocks, and such like; "though he had heard," he said, "that of late Mr. Milward had much improved it, and that some people had gone to see it out of curiosity." My landlord, however, being now called away by the drawer, to attend another company, our two travellers were left to their own reflections.

CHAP. IX.

IT was late in the afternoon before Hortensius and Atticus proceeded towards Columella's habitation. According to the instructions they had received, about half a mile from the house, they turned out of the great road; and after crossing one field, entered

entered into a small wood or grove of oaks, through a gate painted green, at which a miller's boy, as he seemed to be, was kicking and pommelling his horse, because he could not discover how the latch (which was somewhat intricate) was to be lifted up: "D-mn his *crazy* head," says the boy, speaking of Columella, "what does the man make gates for, that a body cann't open!"

Atticus rebuked the lad for his passionate treatment of his horse, but considered this as a fresh proof of the odd character their friend had got amongst his neighbours.

They now proceeded about half a quarter of a mile through the wood, along a winding road, which terminated in a circular area or small amphitheatre of trees; in the centre

of

of which rose the front of a small gothic house, neatly fitted up, embosomed in a thicket of beech and hornbeam, and a variety of elegant shrubs.

On their servant's knocking at the door, an handsome, prim sort of a damsel, dressed rather above her apparent station in life, made her appearance, and asked them what they pleased to *lack*? "Why, my dear," says Hortensius, "we *lack* to see Mr. Milward, if he is at home." The housekeeper (for such she was) said her master was in the garden, and offered to call him; but the travellers, leaping off their horses, said they would not give her that trouble, as they were desirous to see the garden, and were come to make Mr. Milward a visit.

As

As Atticus and Hortensius were riding towards the house, they had been debating the matter with themselves, how they should probably find their old friend employed in his philosophical retreat. Though he had always been fond of books that treated of agriculture and rural subjects, as was before observed, yet they knew he was too indolent to be more than a speculative farmer: they did not expect, therefore, to meet with him amongst his hay-makers, or his reapers; but were convinced they should find him either sauntering in his fields, and superintending some ornamental improvement or work of taste; or else perhaps reclined at the foot of some tree, or sitting in an alcove in his garden, reading Thompson's Seasons,

sons, or Shenstone's Works, or perhaps Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia, the Castle of Otranto, or some other work of taste or imagination.

They were pretty right as to the place, but not so as to the present employment of Columella; for on opening the garden-gate, they discovered their philosophical friend running across the lawn, with a faggot-stick in one hand, and a book in the other, his hair about his ears, and one stocking about his heels, in a most violent paroxysm of rage; “D--mn 'em,” says Columella (the torrent of his passion getting the better of his politeness, and even of his surprise at the sight of his old friends) “D--mn 'em,” says he, “these pigs have routed up all my primroses

primroses and periwinkles, which were planted in my shrubbery but last week, and just began to take root."

Columella's wrath, however, began immediately to subside on the approach of his much-loved friends; he soon recovered himself, therefore, ran up to them, and embraced them with the utmost joy and cordiality.

After many apologies for the ridiculous attitude in which they had surprised him, and explaining the nature of his distress, he led them to a sort of rustic grotto or hermitage near the lawn; in which was a matted seat and a rude kind of table; where they found he had really been amusing himself with Seneca on Tranquillity of Soul, Lu-

cas

cas on Happiness, and Hurd's * elegant Dialogue on Retirement.

Columella offered his friends any kind of refreshment; but they begged only to be regaled with some tea in his grotto; which commanded a principal view of the valley in which his house was situated.

The fore ground of this landscape was broken by some tufts of oaks, and other forest trees, on the verge of the lawn; beyond which, on each side of the valley, several little hills, covered with hanging woods, rose in beautiful perspective; the tops or sides of which Columella had ornamented with several striking objects.

On the brow of one hill appeared

* Now Bishop of Litchfield; the Addison of the present age.

the Sibyl's temple, ruined like that at Tivoli ; a pediment, supported by Ionic columns, rose at the foot of another ; the venerable gothic tower of a parish church was discovered at a distance amongst the tufted trees ; and the whole was terminated by some blue mountains in the horizon, and enlivened by a considerable stream, which ran winding down the valley ; over which an old bridge of three arches made a picturesque appearance : and as the sun was now setting behind the western hills, it gave a glowing warmth to the landscape, which would have foiled the pencil of B—f—d, G—b—h, or even of Claude Lorraine himself.

C H A P. X.

“THE man is fit for treasons and conspiracies,” and I would not trust him for half a crown, who wants to be told how happy the three old friends must be in such circumstances, and after an absence of ten years.

The only abatement of their enjoyment arose from the too great solicitude which Columella and his domestics expressed for their accommodations; so natural, and indeed unavoidable, in people who live so much alone, and are so seldom put out of their usual way.

The tea-equipage was hardly removed, when Mrs. Betty came and

VOL. I. D whispered

whispered her master, with an embarrassed air, only to know what sauce he would have for the fowls, as appeared by his answer. In a few minutes man Peter came scratching his head (according to custom) to know whether he must tap the barrel under the window or behind the door? This unseasonable interruption on so frivolous an errand, provoked Columella beyond all patience. Yet, in the midst of an interesting conversation, he himself starts up, and begs their pardon for one moment, only to give some trifling orders about their beds.

In short, though his friends begged him not to make the least alteration in his usual economy on their account, the thing was impossible;

ble; and Columella frequently appeared with an absent air, and answered some important questions with an “humph!” or “very true!” which betrayed the embarrassment of his mind, like Eve, “on hospitable thoughts intent;” and his uncommon anxiety for the entertainment of his friends defeated its own intention.

They continued in the hermitage however, partly admiring the beauty of the scene, and partly engaged in talking over the several incidents which had befallen them since they had last met, till the rising of the dews and the coolness of the evening drove them into the house; so charmed with the beauty and sequestered appearance of Columella’s situation, that Atticus said he should

never relish again his little grass-plot and gravel walk, surrounded by battlements and towers, with noisy bells, in the University; and Hortensius spoke contemptibly even of his chambers in King's Bench Walks in the Temple, though they commanded so fine a view of the Thames, in comparison with the natural and artless beauties of Columella's delightful valley. But they reflected with still greater chagrin on the tumultuous and busy life which they led, when compared with the apparent ease and tranquillity which Columella enjoyed: and notwithstanding the little embarrassments which they had been witnesses to, they pronounced him the happiest of mankind.

C H A P.

C H A P. XI.

MRS. BETTY HAD lighted up her candles, and ordered the cloth to be laid in the best parlour; which was an handsome stuccoed room; the pictures, glasses, and every part of the furniture in which displayed the elegance of Columella's taste. But as he lived so much alone, he usually sat in a little breakfast-room; so that, from an excess of neatness, the best parlour had rather an unfrequented, uncomfortable appearance; and the evening being cool, Atticus, casting his eyes upon the chimney-board (which Mrs. Betty, under Columella's direction, had decked out with shells

and moss) “ If I were at home now,” says Atticus, “ I should remove my chimney-board, and indulge myself in a good coal-fire to night.” “ My dear Atticus,” says Columella, “ are you *not* at home?” And immediately ringing for the housekeeper, he bade her remove her shell-work, and light a fire that instant. “ A fire in July!” says Mrs. Betty, with a significant side-glance at her master, which expressed not only her surprise at a fire in July, but her dissatisfaction at being obliged to disturb the œconomy of her chimney-piece, which she thought secured for the summer-season.

Columella however, without debating the matter, slipped aside the chimney-board, and snatching up one

one of the mould-candles applied it to the combustible materials in the grate; observing, that he had excellent chimnies in his old house, and that the fire would be kindled in a moment.

Unfortunately however for Columella, notwithstanding the boasted excellence of his chimnies, before he had done speaking there descended such a cloud of smoke, and which spread itself so instantaneously over the whole room, that he himself, his guests, and his housekeeper, were forced to grope with their hands stretched out, like Elymas the sorcerer in the cartoons, and were almost suffocated before they could reach the door.

The case was, Mrs. Betty, from

her great care to guard against the dusty operations of the swallows in the upper part of the chimney, had caused the lower part to be barricaded with a sheaf of wheaten straw; which not only repelled the smoke, as has been mentioned, but to increase the uproar, the straw caught fire, and the whole chimney-place was in a blaze; and it was not before the supper got quite cold, that, by the help of man Peter, the cook, and the travellers' servant, they could extinguish the flames.

C H A P. XII.

THEY were now glad to adjourn to the little breakfast-room, where, for half an hour, Columella did nothing but vent his wrath against Mrs. Betty's œconomy ; and again discovered the splenetic habit which he had contracted in his solitude : for in his youth, at college, he was remarkable for the evenness of his temper, and the sweetness of his manners.

“ A confounded toad !” says Columella, “ it is thus she always distresses me by her cursed contrivances !” “ Phoo !” cries Atticus, “ ne-

ver mind it; these little accidents are unavoidable in domestic life."

"I should not have regarded it, at any other time," replies Columella, "but when my friends are about me, and I proposed so much satisfaction in your company, to be plagued with such blundering servants!" — "Come, prythee," says Hortensius, "don't make a serious affair of a diverting accident. Why, this is the very game which Atticus and I are in quest of; and we have determined to extract mirth and amusement from every incident that befalls us on our journey.

"Come," continues Hortensius, to divert his friend's attention from this ludicrous accident, "I'll tell you a short story."

"An

“ An honest sailor, who had lately returned from a successful voyage, was determined to see every diversion which was going on in London at that time of the year. Accordingly he went to see a play, or rather a farce, at Bartholomew-fair: Every thing was conducted to the satisfaction of such an audience, and received with much rude mirth to the end of the second act; when the benches of the gallery in which the sailor was placed, being overloaded, suddenly broke down with a dreadful crash and an horrible outcry; many of the company being much hurt, and one or two having their arms or legs broken.

“ The sailor however, not having suffered by his fall, clapped his oak-

en staff under his arm, sacked up his trowsers and walked off, so well satisfied with his entertainment, that the next night he came again to the theatre with great punctuality, and seated himself in the very same place as the preceding night. The same farce was repeated; and at the end of the second act, our sailor with great fortitude composes himself; and calls out to those who sat next him; “Come, my masters, now for it; we are just a-going! sit fast, my lads!”—In reality, the honest tar considered the falling of the gallery, though a very tragical event, as the principal part of the entertainment, for which he had paid his sixpence.

“And thus, I hope, my friend, if
you

you are determined to fret about trifles, you will give us leave to divert ourselves with this little domestic distress, which could not be foreseen, and which has been attended with no bad consequences."

" Well," says Atticus, " God send we may meet with no broken bones upon our journey! for though an English sailor might, I would not promise to divert myself with accidents of so tragical a nature."

Columella, though his feelings were too delicate for a man of this world, yet smiled at Hortensius's story; and endeavoured to forget his misfortune: and supper being ended, the three friends enjoyed themselves over a flask of Florence wine, till pretty late in the evening.

CHAP.

C H A P. XIII.

THE two travellers slept so soundly after their journey, that neither the sun, which had darted his beams through the curtains, nor the music of the birds, which had been serenading them under their windows for some hours, could rouse them till after eight o'clock. Hortensius, however, had now issued forth from his bed-chamber, and was contemplating the pictures in a sort of gallery, when he was again somewhat alarmed at the sound of his friend Columella's voice below stairs, raised rather above the philosophical pitch, and (as it afterwards appeared)

ed) in a strain of altercation with Mrs. Betty. "Zounds!" says he, "one would think you had lived all your life in an alehouse upon the road (like Mariternes the Asturian, in *Don Quixote*) as lady Wishfor't says." "Good-lack-a-day!" replied a female voice, "why the gentlemen would think us the greatest sluts as ever was; why, Sir, the room was worse than an hog-stye." "Pox take it!" says Columella, "is not a *wet* room worse than a *dirty* room? Why I tell you, the Doctor would not go into a room just washed, for the wealth of At-talus."

The truth was, that Mrs. Betty having been kept up later than usual, and being more solicitous about

I. her

her own housewifery, than the health of her master's guests, had been mopping both the parlours at seven o'clock in the morning, which ought to have been done by five, or, if possible, on the preceding night.

Hortensius, however, when he understood the subject of the dispute, went down and pacified his friend, by assuring him, that by his leave they would breakfast in his garden every morning whilst they continued with him in the country. Columella, therefore, ordered a table to be placed under an old spreading oak, (on the terrace near the parlour window) which had been held so sacred by the family, that it had survived the avarice and the extravagance of many generations,

and had been dignified by Columella with a circular green seat, large enough to accommodate four or five people ; and commanding a different prospect from that of the grotto, it afforded them a fresh cause for admiring the beauty of their friend's situation.

C H A P. XIV.

THE three friends protracted their breakfast chat under the old oak till pretty late in the morning ; when they received a visit from the Parson of the parish in which Columella's house was situated. He had heard that some strangers were there ; and perhaps curiosity might have

have some share in this piece of civility. But he knew that he was always a welcome visitor to Columella, though he had been less frequent in his visits of late, for a reason which will hereafter be mentioned.

Mr. Pomfret, the little Rector, who is an old acquaintance of mine, says the Canon, is a worthy man, and a man of reading, and had taken his degrees in the University. But he is a poor, hectic, miserable-looking creature; and the want of dignity in his person, the want of spirit in his reproofs of vice, and the want of a good elocution to inculcate his virtuous sentiments, prevent him from doing that good in his parish which he might otherwise

wife have done. He preaches tolerable discourses, but with so little emphasis, that his audience frequently fall asleep in the midst of them. If he has occasion to exhort privately any of his parishioners, he does it in so timorous and undecisive a manner, and with so much hesitation, that it loses its effect.

“I have been told, John,” says he to a drunken fellow, “but perhaps it may not be true, that you are apt to drink a little more than does *you good* sometimes. I am afraid, John, you will get an habit of drinking, if you do not take care, John.”—“It’s very fine weather for the after-grass, master Pomfret,” replies honest John.—“Yes; it’s very true,”

true," says the rector; "but I hope, John, you will leave off this bad custom; or you will certainly repent of it hereafter."—"Farmer Johnson begins reaping next Monday, if the weather holds good," quoth John.

With this kind of inattention and indifference, for want of a more forcible manner of expressing himself, do the Rector's parishioners receive his well-meant exhortations.

I cannot attribute so much to eloquence as the ancients did, or as Mr. Sheridan and other great moderns have done; but the want of a good elocution, I am convinced, is frequently attended with very important ill-consequences in private life,

as

as well as upon many public occasions.

Atticus and Hortensius, however, received the little Rector with great freedom and condescension, and they were very soon acquainted. Mr. Pomfret indeed conversed with more spirit and confidence amongst people of learning, and on his own level of understanding, than amongst the illiterate and ignorant vulgar.

“Columella has a delightful place here,” says Hortensius, by way of introductory conversation. “Yes, Sir,” says the Rector, “if happiness depended upon any particular place or situation, I know no one who has a better chance for happiness than our good neighbour here.”

“Ah! Doctor,” says Columella,
“all

“ all is vanity and vexation of spirit.”—“ Well,” says Atticus, “ not to dispute the truth of so long-established a maxim, I hope it is by no means particularly applicable to you, my good friend.” “ I don’t know,” replies Columella; “ whilst I was eagerly bent upon improving my place, and constantly employed in planting shrubs, opening vistas, building temples, and the like, I had always some pursuit or other to engage my attention, and had not time to reflect on the emptiness of all sublunary enjoyments. But now I have pretty nearly brought my works to perfection, and have nothing more to interest my imagination, I am quite sick of the reiterated view of the same scenes; and

and find nothing to balance the constant vexations which attend human life."

"Why," says Atticus, "mere amusements, I am afraid, though we could vary them to an infinite degree, can never satisfy the activity of the human mind. Mankind were never intended (like the Leviathan) merely "to take their pastime," and divert themselves. But suppose you had been engaged ever since you left the University, not merely in embellishing your place (which might have been a subordinate object) but in some more useful pursuit, which would not barely have taken up your time, or employed your thoughts, but would have been advantageous to yourself, and to the public;

public; would not the consciousness of such a right conduct, do you think, have secured you a more heartfelt and a more durable felicity?

“ Suppose, for instance, you had pursued the study of physic (as I believe you at first intended) or of the law, or even of divinity: the preparatory sciences to those professions would have afforded you an agreeable and a rational amusement; and the practice of either of them would have engaged your attention; would have prevented you from growing sick of the world (as you now say you are) and have relieved you from the greatest burthen of life, Time, which you now know not how to employ.”

“ Yes,”

“ Yes ;” says the little Rector, “ this is partly the doctrine which I have long been preaching up to my good neighbour. And as he did not chuse to pursue any learned profession, I would have had him take one of his farms into his hands, to employ his time ; or take a wife, and taste the genuine sweets of domestic life ; and in short, I would wish Mr. Milward to go more into company, and enjoy the comforts of society, and a cheerful neighbourhood. I can perceive an alteration for the better in my friend’s countenance, methinks, even in this short time that you gentlemen have been with him here ; who, I find, are the two friends and school-fellows whom I have so often heard

him mention with such uncommon affection and esteem."

" Yes," says Columella, " if I could always enjoy the company of a few friends of the same taste with myself, and united in the same liberal pursuits of learning, or the polite arts, I should think myself particularly fortunate: but to be plagued with what is commonly called a *sociable* neighbourhood, where people of different tempers, tastes, and ideas, meet together to force a conversation on the most uninteresting topics; when a man, who knows not how otherwise to dispose of himself, comes unexpected and interrupts the train of my ideas, and takes up my time a whole morning, only to tell me how bad my roads are, or that it is

not

not quite so hot to-day as it was yesterday, or that Jack such-a-one got drunk with Harry such-a-one, or the like insipid narrations ;

“ I had rather be a dog and bay the moon,” at least, I had rather live entirely alone, than be entertained with such idle company.”

“ I don’t know,” replies Hortensius, “ one should not, I think, be too fastidious on these occasions. There is certainly a proper time for all things, and one would wish in general to converse with people of our own taste and sentiments ; but society of some kind or other is so essential to our happiness, that even Timon, the greatest misanthrope or man-hater whom we read of in history, could not live without his

Apemantus, to whom he might vent his execrations against the rest of mankind.* And for want of a friend to whom they may safely trust their secret, we see the most melancholy lovers will utter their amorous complaints even to inanimate rocks and lifeless mountains: for as a very elegant † writer observes, “ the firmest mind cannot long support the burthen of uncommunicated thoughts; but must languish under the stagnation of its ideas.”

“ You yourself, my friend, must take a pleasure in talking of your improvements, and other matters of taste; and it is a proper exercise of

* See Plutarch in the life of Marc Anthony.

† Dr. Langhorne’s letters from Theodos. to Constantia. Vol. ii. p. 125.

our benevolence, to listen with attention to people of different sentiments, and of pursuits in life different from our own.

“ When a man indeed from whom I expect more interesting conversation, begins talking to me of the weather, I look upon it as either a stratagem of reserve, or as an hint that he wants to get rid of me ; but for common acquaintance, those general topics may serve ; and what subject can be more generally interesting to Englishmen, than what is of so general concern in this variable climate, as the wind and the weather ? ”

“ Besides,” says the Rector, “ if we had nothing material to communicate, the very sight of a friend,

as Seneca* observes, the mere “ human face divine” gives us a degree of pleasure—“ Non omnes arbusta juvant;” every one is not delighted with groves and lawns. Men of taste, methinks, should condescend sometimes to attend to the concerns of common life: and it is, I think, a vicious indulgence of a selfish humour, for a man to be inattentive to every topic of conversation that does not suit his own capricious fancy; or what he may chuse to call delicacy of sentiment. In short, Sir, as the greatest happiness in this life arises from the exercise of our social affections, I am convinced, that if Mr. Milward would be more *sociable* he would be more *happy*.”

* Amicorum conspectus ipse delectat. SEN.

“ Well,

“ Well, well, Doctor,” replies Columella, a little piqued at this freedom, “ you may preach till you are black in the face, but you will never convince me, that the giving up more of my time to vulgar and illiterate company, would make me more happy; or indeed, that there is any such thing as happiness to be obtained in *this* world.”

“ Why,” says the Rector, “ that is the side of the question which my profession would lead me to defend, in order to direct your thoughts to a more perfect state of felicity in *another* world. But yet, I think, there is a degree of happiness within the reach of the generality of mankind, if it is not their own fault, even in *this* life.”

E 4 “ Come,”

“Come,” says Atticus, “if you are for debating the matter fairly, let us first define the terms, and fix precisely what you mean by happiness; and then enquire, Whether there is, or is not, a possibility of obtaining it in this life?”

“Well, as this is a point of morality,” says Hortensius, “the cause must be tried in the ecclesiastical court; so you and I had better fit still,” says he to Columella, “and attend the issue.”

CHAP. XV.

“WHEN I talk of happiness then,” says the little Rector, “I do not mean the happiness of Angels;

gels, or an uninterrupted state of tranquillity and enjoyment; but such a degree of it, as so imperfect a creature as man in the scale of being, was intended to attain."

"Very true," says Atticus, "and as the happiness of every creature must arise from living and acting agreeably to its *nature*, the happiness of different animals must vary, according to their various *natures* and organs of perception. The beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fishes of the sea, must have different kinds of happiness from each other, and each from that of such a creature as man. To complain, therefore, that man is not capable of a more perfect felicity, is as unreasonable as it would be for a fly,

or any other insect, to complain, that it was not as happy as an archangel.

“ Since the happiness of man then must arise from living and acting agreeably to his *nature*, let us next enquire, of what particulars the *nature* of man is composed; and that will discover to us what is requisite to constitute his felicity.

“ Now, though man partakes, in common with inferior creatures, of some inferior principles; though he has the same instincts and appetites, and the same organs of perception with some of them; yet he is essentially distinguished from all of them, by the superior faculty of reason and reflection; by his intellectual and moral powers; his conscience,

science, or moral sense of the beauty or deformity, of the guilt or innocence, of his actions; and this faculty bears evident marks of its superiority over those less noble principles, and claims the absolute direction of them on all occasions. Neither can any man be said to live, or act *conformably to his nature*, unless he allows that superior principle (of Reason) the authority which is due to it.

“ Now, as we are endued with animal passions and sensual appetites, we may certainly partake of animal gratifications and sensual pleasures, in some degree and with due moderation.

“ As we are furnished with the powers of fancy, we may innocently

amuse ourselves with the pleasures of imagination, with all the various beauties of nature and of art; we may please ourselves with whatever is elegant or ornamental in life, suitably to our rank and fortune: but then all these gratifications must be kept under the strict regulation of Reason and Religion; otherwise they will be so far from contributing to our happiness, that they will most infallibly render us miserable.

“ By gratifying any one principle of our nature to the prejudice of the rest; by giving way to any one passion or appetite; by indulging our imagination, our curiosity, or even our philosophical speculations, beyond the bounds of moderation, and to the neglect of our social duties;

ties; we necessarily destroy that harmony and due balance of the affections, and violate that tranquillity of the soul, without which true happiness cannot subsist.

But when this regular self-government is maintained; when the different parts and principles of our nature, the senses, the passions, and the imagination, have their several gratifications allowed them only in due proportion, so that one passion or appetite does not domineer over the rest, nor any of them rebel against the sovereign principle of Reason; then probably we shall enjoy all the felicity which we are capable of in this present imperfect state of existence."

"There, Doctor," says Hortensius,

86 COLUMELLA; or,

sius, "my friend Atticus has given you a sermon for your congregation next Sunday."

"Why," replies the Rector, "I should be very glad of a sermon upon the subject, as it is what I myself have often thought. I am only afraid the gentleman's discourse is rather too abstracted and refined for my congregation."

C H A P. XVI.

"**I**F you will give me leave, therefore," continued the Rector, "I will endeavour to set the possibility of human happiness, if it were not our own fault, in a more *familiar* light, by a particular instance.—

Let

Let us suppose then," says he, " a man of any rank or station (for happiness is not confined to any particular rank in life) let us suppose him, I say, possessed of a competence suited to the demands of his station ; let such a one discharge faithfully the several branches of his duty to God, to his neighbour, and to himself ; let him be regular in his devotions to God ; just and charitable to his neighbour ; chaste, temperate, and circumspect, in the government of himself ; kind to his domestics ; and, if blessed with children, breeding them up in habits of industry, sobriety, and in " the fear of the Lord ;" and in consequence of all this, let him be rewarded (as he probably will be)

with

with the perpetual sunshine of a good conscience; with health and clearness of spirits; with the respect and esteem of his neighbours; and, lastly, with the reverence and love, the dutiful behaviour and faithful service, of his children and his domestics: What can prevent such a one from enjoying, even in this life, a considerable degree of happiness?"

"I'll tell you what will prevent it," replies Columella, "and demolish at once your fine-spun system of human happiness: suppose your imaginary happy man to be plagued with the tooth-ach twice a year, as I have been for these seven years."

"Well," says the Rector, "but there is an *infallible* remedy for the tooth-ach to be met with in every market-

market-town, and almost in every village in the kingdom. And I have just now read (in my Bath Chronicle) of an artist, who has had “a classical education, as a tooth-drawer,” and glories in undertaking cases “pronounced desperate by the rest of his profession.”

“ I am convinced, however,” continues the Rector, “ that strict temperance and regularity (virtues within every one’s reach) would, in general, prevent all complaints of this kind ; with the gout, stone, and almost every disease incident to human nature : which we see is remarkably the case amongst those savages who have not been *debauched* by their intercourse with *civilized* nations ; though I have provided a

still

still surer remedy for these maladies, in the Christian virtues of Patience and Resignation to the Will of Heaven.

But I must own, however," continues the little Doctor, " that the most formidable objection to our system is yet behind ; which is the sickness or the death of those to whom we are united by the tender ties of love, friendship, or natural affection, which no care or caution of our own can prevent ; and I know by sad experience, in the death of a child, that the pangs of grief, and the feelings of humanity, are often deaf to the remonstrances of reason, and even to the consolations of religion. Yet even in these distressful circumstances, if we have done

done all in our power to relieve or assist them, the consciousness of right behaviour, and the pleasure attending “ this labour of love,” this tender sympathy with those that are dear to us, will greatly alleviate our affliction on these sad occasions ; especially if I may be allowed again to add the Gospel graces, of Faith and Hope ; Faith in the promises of religion, and the Hopes of a reunion with our lost friends in a more perfect state of existence hereafter.”

“ Come, dear Doctor, a truce with your preaching, for Heaven’s sake !” says Columella, reserve the rest of your discourse till *some other opportunity*. Your sermon on happiness will put us in mind of the old

old story of the parson, who had been preaching for above half an hour on the beatitudes, and was told by a wag, that he had omitted one blessing; “Blessed are those that did not hear your sermon.”

“Well, I’ll take the liberty however, to mention one instance more of the possibility of human happiness,” says the Rector, “which you cannot object to; and that is of the old wood-man who lives in the cottage on the side of the hill, and whom you yourself have so often mentioned with envy, as the very picture of felicity and contentment.”

“Give me leave to observe, however, that the wood-man’s happiness does not arise from mere *ease* and *indolence*, nor from contemplating the

the beautiful scenes which surround his sequestered habitation. A cottage is not always the residence of peace and tranquility: but old Thomas is an industrious and sober man; his labour keeps him in health and spirits, and enables him to provide for his family; to procure them wholesome food, brown bread, a flitch of bacon, and a stock of fuel; and himself a comfortable chimney-corner to smoke his pipe in during the gloom of winter."

Here the honest Rector, perceiving Hortensius express signs of inattention and fatigue, blushed at having engrossed so much of the conversation. Atticus however thanked him for having familiarized *his* ideas, and set them in a more striking light.

And

And Hortensius said, they would finish the debate in their morning's walk; which he desired they might take before the sun got too powerful. He then begged Columella to cast his eyes down the beautiful valley before them, and tell him, whether he really thought that Providence intended such a scene to be a mere purgatory or prison-house, the residence of *unavoidable* misery and despair. Mr. Pomfret, the little Rector, being asked to partake of their walk, and of a family dinner, pleaded the illness of his wife; and for the present took his leave.

The Canon had proceeded thus far in his narration, though frequently interrupted by his Kentish acquaintance, who we found was a critic

critic in this sort of writing, and wanted to retrench many trifling circumstances and to add others (though the Canon had told us at first we must not expect the artificial structure, or the surprising incidents of a modern romance in his simple narrative); thus far then he had proceeded, when we perceived our vehicle to stop short on a sudden, and found we were arrived at the Black Bear in Devizes, where we were politely received by the public-spirited Mr. Laurence, who, notwithstanding the sarcastical reflections of his Chippenham antagonists, and their vaunted superiority in being two miles nearer; Mr. Laurence, I say, is the only man upon the

road, for warm rooms, soft beds, and for reading Milton.

While we were regaling ourselves at breakfast with some excellent rolls and green tea (for we were too well versed in travelling to drink coffee-grounds upon the road) the Canon now naturally enquired of his Kentish friend (which his eagerness to read his manuscript had before prevented) how he had passed his life, since he left the University?

“ Why,” says he, “ much after the manner in which too many of our English gentry do; my youth in *“shapeless idleness”* and dissipation; my manhood in a luxurious kind of indolence; and shall probably spend my old age in pain, repentance, and flannel.”

CHAP.

C H A P. XVII.

A Canterbury Tale.

“ **M**Y father,” continues the Squire, “ as you probably know, was nothing more or less than a yeoman of Kent: but, by skill in his business, and great frugality, had saved enough to purchase two good manors, and add them to his paternal estate. And observing, how easily (as it appeared to him) his conveyancer, and other lawyers concerned, got their money, he was determined to breed me to that profession, and save that money in the family.

“ Accordingly I was sent from

VOL. I.

F

the

the University to the Inner Temple; and before I had been there six months, had six or seven of the most intricate cases in the law sent up for my decision: for my good father, not contented with my doing his own business, complimented all his neighbours with my sage advice gratis. But, alas! I was forced to confess, that I had not yet acquired sufficient knowledge in my profession, to give my opinion upon such important points: yet I did not think it proper to acquaint him, that in pursuit of my studies I had only read two chapters in Blackstone's Commentaries; and that I had spent every morning since I had been in town, at the coffee-house, or in the Mall; and every evening either

either at the tavern, or at the play. For I soon found the study of the law so far above my capacity, or at least so crabbed and so irksome to a young man, who knew himself the sole heir to a thousand pounds a year, that I was determined not to make myself a slave, at least to so laborious a profession.

“ My father gave me a handsome allowance, and was proud of being told that I kept *good company*. For indeed I connected myself not only with most of the young men of fire and spirit about town, but so far insinuated myself with some of the principal actors at both the theatres, that I was admitted behind the scenes, and even into the aweful recess of the presence-chamber or

green-room ; and was as proud of shaking hands or leaning upon the shoulder of Jaffier or Lothario, as I should have been of a *tête-à-tête* with a prince of the blood.

“ In this respectable society a young actress of a lively temper and engaging manners, though yet but of inferior rank in her profession, soon attracted my particular regard. I was almost afraid indeed, even off the stage, to speak to your Statiras, Calistas, or any of your high-dressed heroines of the theatre : but this girl appearing generally in the character of an humble friend or a chamber-maid, I found, as Sir Charles Easy says, a “ strange convenience in a white apron,” and the familiar dresses of domestic life ; and,

and, in short, by indulging my amorous desires, and meeting with but slender obstacles to my gratifying them, I became so fond of this nymph, that I soon prevailed upon her to quit her humble situation on the stage, and live with me in private lodgings.

“ Here, for some months, I lived as happily as a man can do, who is conscious of acting improperly, and at an expence which his allowance will not support. For though my fair one professed herself sufficiently happy in my company and careesses, yet she was always contriving some expensive scheme of pleasure, and coaxing me out of considerable sums for laces, trinkets, and

every article of ornament or dress ; and finding at last that she was pretty far advanced in her pregnancy, as this greatly endeared her to me, so on many accounts I began to think seriously of making her my wife ; as the most prudent, as well as the most virtuous scheme, which, in such circumstances, I could pursue. But being under a necessity of paying a visit to my father for a month, the affair of my marriage, which I had never mentioned to my mistress, remained as yet undecided.

“ It was the beginning of May when I went into the country ; from whence I wrote every post (under cover to a particular friend) to my beloved girl ; and received one or

two answers, filled with the fondest expressions of constancy and love.

“ When I had been absent about a fortnight, I received a letter from my confidant ; whose hand I did not immediately recollect ; but upon opening it I found this short article of intelligence :

“ Dear Jack,

“ I have a piece of *good news*
“ to tell you ; Our friend’s lovely
“ Phillis is eloped with Tom the
“ footman in the *Conscious Lovers*,
“ to the Dublin theatre. She has
“ disposed of most of our friend’s
“ moveables, however ; and I believe,
“ out of what he had given her, has
“ made up a tolerable purse ; so that

“ he need not be under any anxiety for any distress she may be exposed to in her peregrination.—“ I heartily congratulate our friend “ on *his* delivery.

“ I am, dear Jack, &c.”

“ As this was the first woman with whom I had ever been so intimately connected, though a little mortified at this news, yet instead of being angry with her, I was tenderly affected with the loss of her; and execrated my own folly in not acquainting the dear creature with my intentions of marrying her; which, I flattered myself, might have secured her wavering affections, and prevented her listening to any other overtures.

“ But

“ But when I came to town, I found by my landlord’s wife, that my Phillis must certainly have been with child when I first took her from the stage; for that she was now in the seventh, if not eighth month of her pregnancy: and my landlord said, he was sorry to see my youth and inexperience so grossly imposed upon; for that my nymph had carried on a constant intercourse with this fellow from the time of my first connection with her; that she always acquainted him with the hours of my absence, which she spent in his company: in short, I had every possible proof of her having imposed upon and jilted me; and yet was some months before I could get the better of my regret for her loss,

“ My father still kept plying me with cases in law: and as I was now above three years standing at the Temple, I could not decently plead ignorance of my profession; I therefore agreed with a young attorney, whom I used to meet at the Coffee-house, for half a guinea a letter, to answer all my father’s questions.

“ But in a few months more I was delivered from the poor old gentleman’s importunity; for though he was an hearty man, and seemed built for a much longer voyage, yet a quack medicine *blew him up* at once, and proved more fatal than the gout or rheumatism, with which he had been some years greatly afflicted.

I now became possessed of a good estate, and a considerable hoard of ready

ready cash ; upon the strength of which, after a decent mourning, I set up a splendid equipage, got into an higher style of life, and exhibited myself at the routs and assemblies at the court-end of the town.

“ Having been so thoroughly mortified by my low intrigue with my theatrical charmer, I now grew more ambitious in my pursuits ; and particularly attached myself to a young woman of quality, though of no great fortune. Lady Seraphina Lan-
guish was almost past her bloom ; but by her manner of dress, and sett-
ting off a good person, she was still very amiable. As I lost my money freely, she seemed not to discourage my distant overtures ; and I really thought myself in a fair way of

F 6 succeeding

succeeding on the footing of honourable love, 'till I met with a formidable rival, as I thought, in a young Cantabrigian; a very handsome fellow, and the only son of a wealthy tradesman in the city. Lady Seraphina then coquetted likewise with *him*; and so far raised my jealousy, that it soon produced a challenge, and we snapped a pistol at each other in the field of battle: but neither of us being violently bent upon manslaughter, the affair ended without blood-shed, and was soon made up to our mutual satisfaction: and Lady Seraphina, for the sake of being a Countess, was the very next week publicly married to old Lord Evergreen; and we were both made

to you will be longer also the

the jest of every card-table from St. James's to Hanover Square.

In short, having now *seen* enough, and been enough *seen*, in the polite world, I was obliged to go into the country upon business of consequence: when I began to reflect upon the absurdity of my late conduct; and having, after some time, proposals made to me, from a brother yeoman and old acquaintance of my father's, of his only daughter, an handsome girl and a good fortune, I bid adieu to the gaiety of life, married and settled in the country: but not having laid in a stock of law, sufficient even for a country justice, I have lived ever since a life of ease and indolence; a kind of "as it were," according to Prior's

expression. But a plentiful table, and want of proper exercise, have made it necessary for me to drink the Bath waters once a year; tho' as my wife loves her children, and is fond of home, she is very well contented to be left to herself for six weeks; and I contrive, as well as I can, to console myself in her absence."

" Well," says the Canon (the Kentish gentleman having concluded his tale) " I will not presume to estimate the precise degree of happiness which you now enjoy; yet I cannot but suspect, that you would probably have been rather more happy, if you had thought proper to have served your country, either in parliament, or in the commission of the peace, or even in the militia,

than

than under that stagnation of spirits, which you find it necessary to rouse by a journey to Bath every year."

But our Voiturier now reminding us that our time was expired, we proceeded on our journey, and the Canon resumed his narration.

C H A P. XVIII.

AS the three friends, Atticus, Hortensius, and Columella, were setting out on their walk, Atticus made an halt at the extremity of the lawn, to survey again the beauties of the prospect; and observed, that there was one hill which projected beyond the rest, and seemed to want some building, or group of trees,

rees, to shade its naked brow. "Ah!" says Columella, " that naked hill is a continual eye-sore to me; and yet I don't know any object which I could wish to see on its top, except a gibbet." " A gibbet!" says Atticus, " I should not think that the most pleasing object in the world." " Why I think I have seen it introduced by Salvator Rosa, or some great painter," says Hortensius, " with good effect, to heighten the idea of a wild, unfrequented country; the usual scene of action for those lawless banditti." " Ah!" replies Columella, " the sight of a mere gibbet would rather offend than give me pleasure, unless I could see the fellow hanged upon it, of whom I bought that little estate: for,

for, you must know, I made the purchase almost with the sole view of ornamenting that barren cliff; and not only paid four or five hundred pounds more than it was worth (which I expected to do) but by the negligence of my attorney, the scoundrel kept back a material writing; to recover which I was forced to file a bill in chancery; and the fellow behaved otherwise in so rascally a manner, that I now cannot bear the sight of what has occasioned me so much trouble and vexation."

" Ah! my good friend," says Atticus, " these, I am afraid, are mere vulgar prejudices, which a philosopher, or at least a christian, should endeavour to overcome, even for his own ease and self-enjoyment. If we were

were to indulge this association of ideas on every occasion in life which had caused us any uneasiness, we should make ourselves compleatly miserable indeed.

“I remember,” continued Atticus, “for some years after I had left school, I could not bear the sight of the place where we had been so long confined under a rigid discipline; and yet I now think it one of the most agreeable country towns in that part of England; being situated, as you know, on the banks of the Thames, amidst flowery meadows and fruitful fields, and abounding in pleasant walks, and a tolerable neighbourhood.

“We should endeavour, by arguments of reason and religion, to conquer

quer as soon as possible these childish prepossessions, which time seldom fails to effect after we have tormented ourselves to no purpose."

Columella had not time to make any reply, as their attention was now more agreeably engaged; they having entered a winding walk, which conducted them gently down the hill, where seats of turf or rustic benches were disposed, at proper intervals, and in points of view to catch some striking object or agreeable scene, which might escape the notice.

From one point the eye was directed through a glade to a gothic spire; from another to a ruined abbey: here a water-fall enlivened the scene; there a smooth expanse of

water

water gave a calm serenity to the prospect. In short, as the valley abounded in beautiful scenes, so Columella had taken care to exhibit them to the greatest advantage.

C H A P. XIX.

WHILST Atticus and Hortensius were applauding their friend's good taste, his man Peter (who for oddity was the counterpart of his master) came up to them, and with a careful brow and important air, told Columella, that the farmer's heifers were got into the young plantation at the bottom of *Aaron's Well.*

“Aaron's Well! you blockhead,”

says

says Columella, “ Arno’s Vale, you mean.” “ Nay, nay,” quoth Peter, “ I know as how the right name of it is Tadpole Bottom ; but Madam Leonora charged me, the very last time she was here, always to call it Aaron’s Well, or Arno’s Vale, or something, I suppose there’s no great difference.” “ Well, well,” says Columella, “ it’s no matter what you call it; but go and drive out the devilish cows, and tell the farmer, if they get in any more I’ll put the hellish toads into the pound!” “ Yes, Sir,” replies Peter, “ and the farmer sswears he’ll pound our red cow, if she gets into his meadow any more. The wanton old slut is always running after their bull, and be pox’d to her !” “ Well, well,” says Columella,

mella, "do you go down now towards the forest seat, you know where I mean, and wait till we come." This was a hint for Peter to give the principal cascade a little additional flash to entertain his friends. For though there was a constant stream, yet at this time of the year the water was somewhat low, and required some little accumulation to give it a proper effect.

As they walked on, Columella informed his friends that Madam Leonora, whom Peter mentioned, was the daughter of a neighbouring gentleman; that she was of a romantic turn, and that her delicacy being disgusted with the vulgar name of "Tadpole Bottom," given to the lower part of the valley (which was

a little marshy) had requested him to call it Arno's Vale; in allusion to my Lord Middlesex's pastoral song on the death of the last Duke of Tuscany, of the house of Medici.

C H A P. XX.

THEY now approached a fine sylvan amphitheatre of old oaks; and Columella promised himself great pleasure in surprising his two friends with some of the principal beauties of the place concentered in one view; when Peter again came up, and addressed his master with great wrath in his countenance; and having learned to mince and modify some of Columella's passionate exclamations,

tions, “Odzounterkins Sir!” says he, “the dickins and all take ‘em! they have been at it again to-night! either *you* or *I* should walk down every morning and watch ‘em: they have almost thrown the urn off the pedestal, and all besmeared the forrest-seat with a christian firreverence, and done a world of mischief besides!”

“Pox take ‘em!” says Columella, “I wish I could once lay hold on some of the hell-hounds, I’d send ‘em to the devil, rot ‘em! I’ll set steel-traps all over the woods, and cut the rascals arms or legs off!”

“Come, come,” says Atticus, “never fret yourself about such trifles, my good friend:”

“Of

“ Of your philosophy you make no use,
“ If you give way to accidental evils.”

SHAKESPEARE.

“ Accidental evils!” replies Columella, “ rot 'em! these are voluntary acts of wanton impudence, and no punishment can be too severe for such audacious villains.”

“ Well, but the punishment should never be disproportioned to the crime,” says Hortensius; “ you would not wish, I am sure, to sacrifice the limb, or perhaps the life, of a poor ignorant creature, to the mere gratification of your fancy. The poor people in most countries seem to have a spite at things of taste, whose utility they cannot comprehend; and to consider any superfluous

ous expence on these occasions, as an insult on their poverty; at least they think, perhaps, that you might bestow your money better, in relieving their necessities, than in indulging an idle curiosity."

"Why I am afraid, indeed," says Columella, recovering his temper, "I myself am to blame in some measure, for extending my pleasure-ground beyond its proper limits; like an ambitious monarch, who, by aiming at too extensive dominions, puts himself in the power of every petty prince to insult him, by making incursions on his borders, and ravaging some of his remoter provinces."

"Yes," says Hortensius, "and I observe your *serene* Highness's domestic

mestic territories are not very well fortified, otherwise it would not have been in the power of those rascally pigs to have broken in upon your meditations, and interrupted your tranquillity, as I find they did last night, when we first arrived; but I see a frog or a grasshopper might scale your ramparts: and I think those gentlemen who go so far into the modern taste, as to level their garden-walls, should be content with forest-trees, or hazel copses and hawthorn bushes, without "primroses or periwinkles," or any curious exotics, which pigs or sheep, or other tasteless animals, may damage or destroy."

"It is very true," says Atticus, "for what enjoyment can our good

friend

G 2

friend expect in these calm scenes, as I said before, if the serenity of his mind should be continually ruffled by storms of passion; as it necessarily must be, when constantly exposed to accidents of this kind? He would sacrifice the ease and happiness of his life, to the delicacy of his taste; the end to the means."

"Yes," says Hortensius (determined to give Columella a moral lecture, without giving him time to reply) "and I am afraid the many little vexations which on this account our good friend has met with, have had an ill effect on his temper; which, I am sure, was naturally of the most amiable kind."

"Well, well, proceed, gentlemen, proceed," says Columella,
brusifi. "I have

“ I have wanted for some time to have my wounds probed by some friendly hand, as I am conscious I have some *proud flesh* about me, and all is not sound in my inner man.”

“ Why,” says Atticus, “ I have not taken upon me to rebuke you, my dear friend, for your many profane exclamations, in which I perceive you have indulged yourself of late; because I think the immorality on those occasions consists rather in giving way to an unreasonable passion, than in venting it in these unmeaning expletives. Those high-sounding words appear to me rather foolish than wicked; for when a man is wetted to the skin, suppose by an unexpected shower of

rain,

rain, or breaks his shin over a wheel-barrow, and cries out, “ ‘Pox take it !’ or “ the Devil confound it !” or the like ; he is wicked perhaps in fretting at those accidents, which Providence thinks proper to permit, and which were probably the consequence of his own negligence and inattention : but what is the poor wheel-barrow the worse for his foolish execrations ? or what sense is there in wishing the rain at the Devil ? which, though it may have damaged your coat, may probably have fertilized your fields, and enriched a whole country for twenty miles around. In short, my friend, let me recommend to you, I will not say the meekness of a Christian, but the patience of a philosopher, which

which is the character you seem to aim at ; and then these paroxysms of wrath would not so frequently interrupt that *tranquillity* which your plan of life, and your delightful situation, seem calculated to produce."

Columella thanked his friends for the freedom of their advice, however mortifying it really was to his self-love. But now, without regarding the damages which Peter had complained of (whose resentment at the indignity offered to himself and his master, by some spiteful neighbours, had made him aggravate the affair) the whole attention, I say, of Atticus and Hortensius, was now fixed upon a most beautiful cascade, or rather wild cataract ; which, falling from a rock of a pro-

igious height, shaded by a gloomy scene of old trees and wild shrubs, and broken in its fall by some projecting fragments or roots of trees that shot fantastically across it, was received at the bottom in a rough kind of basin, of a large dimension, formed by various crags, covered with moss, or interspersed with flags and other aquatic plants, then winding irregularly along the valley, after various meanders it lost itself in a distant wood. Atticus and Hortensius were quite lavish of their encomiums on Columella's cascade; but observed, that Nature must claim the chief merit of that beautiful scene, as she had done every thing for him.

Columella replied, " that he hoped

he

he had done something for Nature too ; though neither of them could claim any merit in the affair, as it was only copied from a cascade upon a much larger scale belonging to Mr. B——, a gentleman in this county, as well known for his skill in painting, as for his good sense, great benevolence, and other amiable qualities."

Atticus said, " he did not know Mr. B——, but that he had married a Lady out of their country, who, he was sure, was not inferior to her husband in ingenuity ; or to any of her sex in good sense, and every female accomplishment."

When they had sufficiently regaled themselves with these beauties, their sight was attracted by another

unexpected view of the Sibyl's temple; whose mimic rotundo appeared almost suspended in the air amidst the surrounding groves.

Continuing their walk, they came to a beautiful stone urn, in a gloomy recess formed by a circle of spreading beeches, on whose pedestal was inscribed, “*GENIO LOCI*”; in allusion to that awful idea with which poets and persons of warm imaginations have always been impressed, of some supernatural and invisible Being, which inhabits and presides over woods and solitudes; and as expressive of that pleasure which we receive from the simple beauties of Nature.

Winding up the opposite side of the valley, in their return they came

to an agreeable, unexpensive sort of grotto or alcove, formed of the limbs of barked oak, and stumps or roots of trees, dispersed in a grotesque manner, and shaded with a vine which crept wildly round it, intermixed with honey-suckles and other odoriferous shrubs. This seat commanded a different view of the cascade, and gave them also a cheerful prospect of the country, terminated by distant hills and mountains; the azure tops of which were melted away and lost in the horizon. In short, there are few parts of England which can boast of more beauty and variety than that thro' which Columella had conducted his amiable friends.

C H A P. XXI.

WHEN they returned to the house, Mrs. Betty brought her master a card, to which she said Mr. Nonsuch's servant waited for an answer.

“ Mr. Nonsuch and daughters present their respectful compliments to Mr. Milward; and if agreeable, will wait on him this evening to tea.”

“ *Respectful* compliments!” says Columella, “ curse his flimsy epithet!—tell the man I am engaged.—’Tis only a piece of impertinence, because

because they have heard I have some strangers with me."—"Yes," says Mrs. Betty (half aside to her master) "I suppose they only comes upon the spy."

"Oh! prythee," says Hortensius, "don't go to affront people; for Heaven's sake let us have a specimen of your neighbours, especially as I find there are some young ladies in the case."

"Well, well," replies Columella, "do as you will.—Return my compliments then," says he to the house-keeper, "and tell them we shall be glad to see them.

"You'll soon have enough of them," continues Columella; "the old gentleman has been in trade, but having been serviceable also to a great

a great man at the Westminster election, and by that means got early intelligence of an approaching peace with France, by purchasing deeply in the stocks when very low, he made twenty thousand pounds in a few days time, and retired from business. The man has no harm in him; but has taken it into his head, that there never were but two wise men in the world, *himself* and king *Solomon*: he thinks his superiority of fortune gives him a superiority of understanding; and is always giving me advice which I never follow; and wants to regulate my taste and opinions by his own standard, which he looks upon as infallible.

“ As for the girls; Miss Leonora, the elder, whom I mentioned to you

just

just now, will talk you to death ; and the younger, Miss Matilda, will not speak a word."

" Well," says Hortensius, " those are the very girls we want. Atticus likes a woman that will save him the trouble of talking ; and I prefer one who will let me have all the talk to myself."

" Why, if you like them," replies Columella, " the old gentleman wants to marry them off ; and they will have at least five thousand pounds a-piece down upon the carpet, besides contingencies.

" But if you think either of them too young, there is a third lady, who will probably attend them, if her complexion is in tune, of a more discreet age ; and that is Miss

Sacharissa

Sacharissa Nonsuch, the old gentleman's maiden sister; who has a pretty good fortune, and probably would not be so expensive in her child-bed linen, wet-nurses, and the like."

"I should suppose by her name," says Hortensius, "that she was born before the restoration; as I have not heard of any one called Sacharissa since the days of Waller."

"No," says Columella, "she is really an agreeable middle-aged virgin; and no one would think her more than five and forty, if she were not always introducing the subject of her age, and finding excuses for some few marks of antiquity in her appearance. The last time she visited here, she was making an apology

logy to a blunt fellow, for having lost a tooth or two in front; but assured him it was only owing to a dreadful fall from her horse a few years before. "Yes," says the rustic, "and I suppose, madam, the fright of your fall turned your hair grey."

"She affects a great fondness for the country, for shades and solitudes; but it is only when her card-parties are out of town, and she cannot meet with people of her own taste in the neighbourhood, who will shut themselves up, let down the curtains, and spend the finest summer evenings at whist or quadrille, for which she would give up Paradise itself."

But their further conversation was now

now interrupted by a summons to dinner.

C H A P. XXII.

NO situation discovers a man's domestic character more truly than his behaviour at his own table. He that is happy in himself, that has his passions under proper regulations, and gives a due attention to the more important duties of life, is above regarding, or will laugh at, the little incidental distresses that sometimes disconcert the good lady of an house, or ruffle the temper of idle folks.

Columella, on the contrary, having been so long his own master, and having had nothing of more consequence to employ his thoughts, had

had contracted such an habit of finding fault at his own table, and fretting at the unskilfulness of his cook, that he could not help discovering some peevish complaints before his old friends — The fowls, he cried, were as dry as an Egyptian mummy; the ham as hard and impenetrable as a stock-fish; and the pudding on the contrary not warmed through: Yet, after helping his friends, and muttering his execrations against his domestics, he contrived to masticate a slice or two of ham, a leg and wing of a large pullet, and made Mrs. Betty a practical panegyric upon her plumb-pudding.

After sitting for an hour in an indolent tooth-pick way, and exhilarating themselves with a glass of wine, the arrival

arrival of their visitants at the gate was announced. The two gentlemen started up with impatience; but before they reached the door, old Mr. Nonsuch, who attended the chariot on horseback, was just alighted. After the usual salutations, Hortensius observed to him, by way of introductory chat, that they rode with gambadoes in this country. "Yes, Sir," says Nonsuch, "they are ugly things, but I, you see, Sir, have *mine* upon an improved principle; they neither open behind nor on the side, but in an oblique direction, which is attended with considerable advantages."

Before he had time to explain them however, their attention was diverted to the ladies, particularly

to

to Miss Leonora Nonsuch; who, as Atticus was handing her out of the chariot, calls out to Columella, with one foot upon the step, “Miss Arundell is married!”—“Yes,” says Columella, “I heard a month ago it was a *done thing*.”—“Oh!” says she, “but what you heard was a *done thing* a month ago, is all *undone* again, and things have taken an unexpected turn.” “Yes, yes,” says old Mr. Nonsuch, “I *foretold* what would come to pass: my daughter has a fine romantic tale for you, when we get to tea. But come, Sir, let us first take a turn upon your terrace, and see your improvements; you are always doing something new.”

Accordingly, when the younger
Miss

Miss Nonsuch and Aunt Sacharissa (whose curiosity tempted her abroad, in spite of an unruly pimple or two which had forced their way through all her lotions and pomatum) the ladies, I say, being now all alighted, after some ceremony, and some speeches (some wise and some otherwise) the good company arrived on the terrace.

“Our friend Columella has a most romantic place here,” says Hortensius. “Yes, yes,” replies Mr. Nonsuch, “here are great *capabilities* to be sure, if your friend would but listen to advice: *I* would make a complete thing of this, if *I* had the new modelling of it; *I* have often given my opinion, but Mr. Milward is bigotted to his own taste. *I* would

would have him, for instance, build a pigeon-house at the end of this terrace, which seems to require some termination of that kind." "O! dear Papa!" cries Miss Leonora, "what! and cut down this venerable oak, and this delightful honey-suckle that creeps round it, and intercept the prospect of those Arcadian hills and hanging woods, to build a pigeon-house!" "Well, well," says old Nonfuch, "but in my opinion, a good pigeon-pye, or half a dozen pigeons roasted with parsley and butter, when a friend comes in on a sudden, is a better *prospect* than all the hanging woods or Arcadian hills in the universe."

"Then what a fine string of canals and fish-ponds," says Nonfuch,

such, “ might our friend make down this valley, which now turns to no account ! I fancy, gentlemen, you would like a brace of stewed carp, or a good trout, or a good fallad of water-cresses in the spring, with a loin of veal, full as well as that little tinkling stream and beds of moss, which Mr. Milward is so fond of. I own, I am for a little of the “ Utile” with the “ Dulci,” profit and pleasure united, as our honest Doctor says. But I have given my advice often enough already.”

“ Yes, Sir,” says Columella, “ and I have as often told you, that I hate pigeon-houses and canals, and fish-ponds, and every thing of that kind. Water should never appear either square or round, or in any shape but such

such as it would naturally form itself into, if left to its own natural force and direction."

They were now come to the rustic grotto or hermitage, where Mrs. Sacharissa rapturously exclaimed,

"O sacred solitude! divine retreat!"

"What a snug recess is here," says she, "from the prying eyes of the vulgar, and the intrusion of faithless man!"

"For a *tête-à-tête* at piquet, or a pool at quadrille, you mean, sister," cries Mr. Nonsuch; "but I fancy Mr. Milward puts it to a better use."

"Well, and what say you, fair lady?" says Hortensius to Miss Matilda.

VOL. I.

H

"Oh!

“ Oh!” replies Miss Leonora, without giving her sister time to declare her sentiments, “ Matilda would work herself to death at her tambour in this hermitage, or mope herself into the statue of melancholy.”

“ Here’s room for contemplation, ev’n to madnes.”

“ But come,” continues she, “ pray Mr. Milward, let us go down into Arno’s Vale, and shew the gentlemen your delightful cascade.” Columella told her that they were but just returned from thence before dinner, and the walk would be too long for the company at present.

Mr. Nonsuch was going on to enforce many more of his proposed alterations,

terations and fancied improvements, which Columella as strenuously controverted as Nonsuch enforced ; when Peter came and whispered his master, that tea and coffee were ready ; and so the company adjourned to the best parlour.

C H A P. XXIII.

AFTER tea Mrs. Sacharissa Nonsuch smiling upon Columella, said, she would venture a wager that he had not a pack of cards in the house. "Yes," says he, "I believe I have ; for I last night saw my cook and these gentlemen's servant playing at putt or all-fours in the kitchen." "Well," says she,

H 2

"but

“ but as those may be a little soiled by use, I have taken the liberty to bring a pack in my pocket. It is a kind of an affront to the rural deities not to enjoy this fine evening in your Sylvan shades ; but one so seldom meets with a quadrille party in the country, that I cannot lose this opportunity : and I have fixed upon this gentleman,” says she to Hortensius, “ to play the vole with me.” Hortensius accepted the challenge, and made Mrs. Sacharissa a gallant speech, which she received with a pat upon the shoulder with her fan ; then smacking the cards upon the table, and breaking open the cover that contained them, she invited the company to cut in

for

for a pool at quadrille. Columella would have followed Hortensius's example out of complaisance; but as Mr. Nonsuch knew his aversion to cards, he politely sat down himself, and forcing his silent daughter, Miss Matilda, into the service, left Miss Leonora, Atticus, and Columella, to amuse themselves with the story of Miss Arundel; to which they also promised to listen, as quadrille did not require the attention necessary to a rubber at whist, or to a proposition in Euclid.

Miss Nonsuch then said, if Columella would acquaint his friends with the particulars of the first part of Miss Arundel's story, she would relate the sequel; and she and Dr.

Atkins, in the mean time, would, if possible, listen with silence to his narration. Atticus replied, he would answer for himself; but would not engage for a young lady of Miss Leonora's sprightliness and vivacity: Columella, therefore, without further ceremony, thus began.

C H A P. XXIV.

*The Generous Contest; or, the Story
of Miss Julia Arundel.*

“MISS Arundel, whom I only know by sight,” says Columella, “is a very handsome young woman.” “Handsome!” says Miss Nonsuch, “I am sure you cannot call

call her handsome ; she has a good complexion, and is a good height."

" Well then," continues Columella, " we'll say she's a very amiable and accomplished young lady, and now the only daughter of Mr. Arundel ; a very worthy gentleman in this neighbourhood, and a distant branch, I believe, of the noble family of that name. Mr. Arundel was called to the bar, and was thought capable of making some figure in the law ; but having a pretty good family estate, which was considerably augmented by several unexpected accessions, and having only two sons and this daughter, he chose rather to serve his country as an independent, peaceable magistrate,

H 4 than

than to spend his life in perpetual noise and litigations in the courts of law."

"Yes, yes," says Mr. Nonsuch (turning his head from the card-table over his left shoulder) Mr. Arundel, however, enjoys *otium cum dignitate*, a dignified retreat, as our little Doctor says: he lives a *retired*, but not an *idle* life; and serves his country in the commission of the peace, as I would have our friend Mr. Milward here do."

"Well, much good may it do him!" replies Columella; "but let me proceed with my story.

"When Miss Arundel was about fifteen, a gentleman who had made a purchase in the neighbourhood,

came

came to spend a few of his summer months in the country, with his lady, a very young daughter, and his only son, who was about the same age with Miss Arundel, and a very sensible and accomplished, as well as a personable young man.

“ Mr. Barty, his father, was a London merchant, of an extensive trade; very attentive to business; and who only bought a country house in compliance with the daily solicitations of his wife; who considered it as an indispensable piece of grandeur, to spend a month or two in the country, as the rest of her neighbours did.

“ As they were the nearest and almost the only neighbours in this part

of the country, Mr. Arundel's and Mr. Barty's families were frequently together; and there being a kind of mechanical attraction between two young people of the same age, who meet often in the same neighbourhood, young Barty and Miss Arundel became of course extremely intimate.

" As on every visit their respective parents, out of compliment to Mrs. Barty, were generally engaged at whist, the two young folks had frequent opportunities of being alone together, which they sometimes employed in reading a play, or a spectator, in the same room; and sometimes in a more interesting manner, in some alcove or shrubbery

shrubbery in the garden. Though as Miss Arundel was so young, and Mr. Barty a youth of great delicacy, and they were always attended by young Barty's little sister in her hanging-sleeves, he had never ventured to make a formal declaration of his passion for Miss Arundel. Neither perhaps had either he or Miss Arundel any explicit idea of that mutual attachment which subsisted between them, and made them always happiest in each other's company.

C H A P. XXV.

"ONE day as Mr. Arundel was reading the life of Lord Clarendon to his lady, while the fate at work, as Mrs. Arundel's whole thoughts from the time her daughter was nine years old, had been taken up in disposing of her in marriage, she interrupted Mr. Arundel in the midst of a most interesting passage, with what passed in her own breast: "Young Barty would be a good match for our Julia," says she. "Pooh!" cries Mr. Arundel, "don't talk of that now." "Why not?" says she; "you are so fond

of

of these books, you'll never do any thing for the good of your own family. I will have you go this very day, and propose it to old Barty. I am convinced the young people are agreed, they are never easy apart, and were an hour together yesterday in the pavilion in the garden, and it is time to come to an explanation."

" My dear," says Mr. Arundel, " I know old Barty so well, he is a man so intent upon raising a large fortune and a family estate, that he will never consent to marry his son to so small a fortune as our daughter will have; and I should not care to make overtures which I am confident would be rejected."

" Fiddle ! faddle !" replies Mrs.

Arundel,

Arundel, “you are always so diffident and so dilatory in your own affairs; if it was to serve people that you had no business to serve, you would be active enough. I know Barty would be proud of the alliance: consider your family and connections.”

“Family!” cries Mr. Arundel, “who regards family now-a-days? what would a pedigree sell for at Jonathan’s or the exchange? Besides, though *Barty* cannot spell his own name, as many an honest man cannot, yet he is probably of as good a family as I am; and perhaps is as nearly related to the Ancaster or Abingdon families as I am to the Arundel’s.”

“Come,

“ Come, come, Mr. Milward,” says Miss Leonora Nonsuch, “ go on with your story; this dialogue, I believe, between Mr. Arundel and his lady is all of your own invention.”

C H A P. XXV. *Continued.*

“ Well then,” proceeds Columella, “ Mr. Arundel, thus importuned by his lady, took an opportunity of mentioning the affair to Mr. Barty, who (as he had foretold) acknowledged himself indeed greatly honoured by the proposal, and did not doubt, he said, that a young lady of Miss Arundel’s merit would be a much better match

match than his son could make pretensions to: but that he was a young man who must make his way in the world, and that his engaging so early in the cares of domestic life, would probably give a check to his industry, or at least take off his attention from business, and prevent his making that progress in his profession which he could wish him to do—and the like.

“ As the issue of this transaction created some coldness betwixt the two families, each party drew off their forces: that is, the young people were strictly forbidden by their respective parents to have any kind of private intercourse; having each been informed of what had passed, and

of course admonished of the impropriety of such a connection for the future. And as Mrs. Arundel had always supported her parental authority with an high hand, and Mr. Arundel enforced the filial duty from religious motives and rational principles, the awe in which Miss Arundel stood of the one, and the love which she bore to the other, were a sufficient security for her obedience.

“ As young Barty, however, had more generous sentiments than his father, and the idea of interest had never entered into his head in his intercourse with Miss Arundel ; and as this prohibition had awakened his sensibility, and convinced him

how

how necessary Miss Arundel's company was to his happiness ; he soon took an opportunity of conveying a letter to her, in which he lamented the cruel embargo which was laid on their friendship by their parents ; made the most earnest professions of the tenderest regard for her ; vowed eternal constancy on his part, and declared that no views of interest should ever interfere with the ardent love, and sincere esteem, which he should always retain for the dear object of his affections : and, in short, that he would wait in hopes of some favourable event, which might permit him to renew that personal correspondence in which Miss Arundel had hitherto indulged him,

him, and on which the happiness of his life would depend.

“ To this generous declaration Miss Arundel found an opportunity of returning a short answer ; in which she told him, that she was greatly obliged to him for the regard he professed for her ; and should always retain a sincere friendship for him : but as *she* was determined never to do any thing which should give *her* father or mother a moment’s uneasiness ; so she hoped, if he valued her esteem, *he* would never act contrary to that filial duty, which, he was sensible, every young person owed to his parents.”

“ Miss Arundel is a very sensible
young

young woman," cries Mrs. Sacharissa, from the card table.

" Well," continues Columella, " though young Barty was awed into silence by this grave and cold reply, he still retained the same fond regard for Miss Arundel; and with great reluctance submitted to the severe restraint, which was laid upon him by the peremptory commands of a stern and rigid parent."

" Yes, yes," says old Mr. Non-such, " all young people, now-a-days, think their parents too *rigid* if they cannot have their own humour in every thing, though it would run them headlong to destruction."

CHAP.

CHAP. XXV. *Continued.*

“ Well,” continues Columella, “ at the time of this negotiation between Mr. Arundel and old Mr. Barty, Mr. Arundel’s eldest son was abroad on his travels, and resident for some time at a foreign university; where the luxury and extravagance introduced by a great resort of foreigners, and particularly of our young English nobility, unrestrained by any kind of academical discipline, had produced very great irregularities. In short, young Arundel being removed from the watchful eye of a very worthy father,

ther, without any other governor than a Swiss valet de chambre, from a sober, sensible young man, was become a dissolute rake; and after being engaged in several riots and affairs of *honour*, was at length killed in a duel.

“ The next winter the younger brother, who was a student at Cambridge, caught a violent cold; which being too long neglected, brought on a peripneumony, or inflammation of the lungs, which carried him off, to the great grief of the family, before the end of the summer.

“ Miss Arundel was now, therefore, become the sole heiress to near two thousand pounds a year; and as soon as Mr. Barty’s family came into the country,

country, they were very early in their compliments of condolance; and rather officiously punctual in other marks of ceremonious respect.

“ Mrs. Arundel, however, who had now higher views for her daughter, behaved with great distance and reserve; and let almost a month elapse before she vouchsafed to return the visit which Mr. Barty’s family had made them, on the late melancholy occasion.

“ Mrs. Arundel also repeated her injunctions to her daughter, of behaving with particular reserve towards young Barty; reminding her of the flight which the father and mother had already put upon them; and endeavouring to inspire her with

more

more elevated sentiments, proportionable to her enlarged expectations. She observed, that Miss Arundel was no longer to consider herself as one of the younger branches; but as the principal stem and representative of the family: that it was in some measure a *duty* incumbent on her to support its dignity, by marrying suitably to her rank and fortune; that any attachment which she might be inclined to indulge, when her poor brothers were living, would be highly improper and imprudent now matters were so greatly altered.

“ Miss Arundel told her mamma, and probably with sincerity, that she never would act in any instance contrary

contrary to the sentiments of her father and mother ; that she hoped to live many years under their kind protection, having not yet formed a wish to change her present happy situation, under the care of the best of parents.

C H A P. XXVI.

“ **N**Otwithstanding these general professions of duty and submission however, as Miss Arundel saw poor young Barty appear always with the most desponding air, and whenever they met, observing the most respectful distance, she would have thought herself guilty of very great ingratitude, as well

as cruelty, if she had not made some kind of requital for his generous behaviour to her, when the superiority of fortune was apparently on his side.

“ Before the summer was over therefore, she came to a resolution, and wrote him a short letter, to acquaint him that she still retained a grateful sense of his generosity, and should always think herself happy in his friendship.

“ In order to convey the letter which she had written, Miss Arundel took a walk one evening with her maid, to a little dairy-farm about a mile distant, which was rented by a sort of game-keeper of Mr. Barty’s, who had married a woman that had lived in Mr. Arundel’s family, and had

had been something of a favourite with Miss Arundel. The game-keeper's wife had lately been brought to bed ; which gave Miss Arundel a plausible pretence for visiting and making her some little present on the occasion.

"As the poor woman was not prepared for such a visitant, she begged the favour of Miss Arundel to sit down a moment below stairs, while her room was put in order to receive her. Leaving her maid therefore talking in the barton, Miss Arundel went into a little garden ; where, at the foot of an old elm, she found a kind of arbour planted round with roses and sweet-brier, and sat down upon a rustic bench which the game-keeper had

made there. She had repos'd herself but a few minutes, when she saw a glimpse of two men pass by with guns on their shoulders ; and immediately after was (not disagreeably) surprised at the sight of young Barty ; who, returning with the game-keeper from partridge-shoot-ing, had seen her maid in the yard, and on hearing she was there, flew on the wings of love to the arbour where she was fitting.

“ Miss Arundel blushed (tho' not with indignation) at the sight of a youth for whom she had so long had a regard. He approached her in a submissive attitude, and hoped she would pardon this intrusion ; but as they were to leave the coun-try in a few days, on hearing she

was

was so near him, “ not all the prohibitions of the most tyrannical parents under Heaven,” he said, “ nor any power on earth, but Miss Arundel’s frown, should prevent him from thus approaching her, to take a long farewell.”

“ Miss Arundel replied, a little prudishly, that although she thought herself happy in this opportunity of assuring him, that she yet did, and always should, retain a sincere friendship and esteem for him, yet she could not, consistently with the duty she owed her parents, indulge herself in an interview of this kind: and was rising to leave the arbour, but he gently forced her to keep her seat, and placed himself by her for a few minutes; having full

possession of her delicate hand and arm, which he often kissed, and even bathed with his tears, lamenting his hard fate, and protesting an inviolable attachment to her; and that he would renounce the whole sex for her sake, however slender his hopes might be of ever being blessed with an adequate return.

“ Miss Arundel listened with pleasure to this declaration; and tho’ she would not raise his expectations too high, yet she hoped that some favourable circumstance might in time soften the rigour of her parents, and make them more favourable to his pretensions. Young Bar-
ty was in raptures at this hint in his favour; and repeated his own vows, and sealed them with an ar-
dent

dent kiss ; which, with a very slight reluctance, Miss Arundel permitted him to take ; and the thrilling contact of which, made a mutual impression which seven years absence, I believe, has not been able to obliterate."

" There's for you, Madam," says Hortensius, directing his discourse to Aunt Sacharissa, but with a side-glance on the amiable, blushing Miss Matilda. Mrs. Sacharissa gave him a gentle jog with her knee under the table ; and Columella proceeded.

" Miss Arundel however now rose up with some precipitation," says he, " to visit the poor woman ; with whom she chose to leave the note which she had written, requesting her to let her husband deliver it as

directed: Which request being accompanied with half a guinea, sufficiently secured the poor woman and her husband in Miss Arundel's interest."

C H A P. XXVII.

" THE note which Miss Arundel left for young Barty contained little more than what she had hinted to him when they met, " that although she persisted in her resolution never to do any thing contrary to the duty she owed her parents, who, she was afraid, at present had *different views* for her; yet in return for his former generous behaviour, she could not conceal the sentiments of esteem which she entertained for him; and that as long

“ long as he retained the same partiality in her favour which he had formerly professed, she never would enter into any engagements inconsistent with that friendship which subsisted between them.”

“ The surprise and joy which this letter at first gave young Barty was so great, that he almost distrusted his own senses. After perusing it however a second time, the hint of Miss Arundel’s parents having “ different views” for their daughter, checked his ardor, and threw him into a fit of despair. On considering the affair for some time therefore, he was resolved not to be overcome by Miss Arundel in this generous contest; but in pursuance of a scheme

a scheme which he had some time been meditating, he wrote her an answer to this purpose.

“ That although one part of her letter had raised him to the most exalted pitch of joy, yet another part of it had sunk him to the very brink of despair: that he should think himself the happiest of mankind if he could flatter himself with the most distant hope of ever being united to Miss Arundel, without any other dowry than her personal charms; but would never think of defeating the intentions of such worthy parents, for advancing the happiness of their daughter; a person for whom he had such a disinterested

“ disinterested regard. In short,
“ that he should always adore Miss
“ Arundel for her generous senti-
“ ments; but as things were at
“ present circumstanced, he must
“ take a *long* and perhaps an *eter-*
“ *nal* adieu!”

“ This letter greatly alarmed Miss Arundel; and she began to repent that she had not been more explicit in regard to her real sentiments, or at least had expressed herself with less severity in relation to the obedience which she thought due to her father's and mother's stern commands: and as she had no confidant to whom she could communicate her uneasiness, her distress by degrees brought on a fit of illness;

so that, although Mr. Barty's family sent frequently to enquire after her health, yet she never saw young Barty any more, the short time they remained in the country.

C H A P. XXVIII.

“ **S**OME part of the winter had now elapsed before Miss Arundel could get any intelligence of the Barty family; when as she was walking out one fine frosty morning with her maid, towards a remote part of the lawn, Mr. Barty's game-keeper, with his gun upon his shoulder, came up to her, and delivered a small packet tied up in some blue paper, which he said was a book

a book that had been left at his house, by some of Mr. Barty's family, before they went out of the country, with orders to be delivered to Miss Arundel; but that his wife had mislaid it, and he hoped Miss Arundel would pardon her for her neglect.

“ This, you will guess, was only a stratagem of young Barty's to convey a letter to Miss Arundel with less suspicion. ^{at} She knew he had no book of hers, so opened the packet with some circumspection, and soon perceived the book was only the vehicle of a billet, which she slipt into her bosom, and returning home with great impatience (for she had more sense than to trust her maid with her secrets) found the contents to this effect:

Blissful I

5

“ My

“ My dearest Miss Arundel,
“ I should be unworthy of that
“ friendship with which you so
“ greatly honour me, if I could
“ entertain a thought of defeating
“ the scheme of grandeur which I
“ find your parents have in view for
“ you, by wishing you to stoop to a
“ person so far inferior to you in
“ point of fortune, as well as every
“ other qualification. I have there-
“ fore determined to banish myself
“ from your presence, and shall actu-
“ ally embark in a few days for India.
“ If fortune should so far smile upon
“ my undertaking, as she has upon
“ those of many other adventurers,
“ and raise me in a few years to a
“ level with the expectations of your
“ friends, as they seem to have no
“ other objection to my pretensions,

“ I should

“ I should return with rapture, and
“ throw myself at your feet: but
“ in every other view, all the wealth
“ of the Indies would add nothing
“ to the felicity of him, who only
“ wishes to live whilst he can hope
“ for your favour, and subscribe
“ himself,

“ Dear Madam,

“ Your obliged friend,
“ and devoted humble servant,

“ W. BARTY.”

“ You may guess what effect this letter produced upon Miss Arundel; she dropt it on the floor, wrung her hands, and stamped about the room in an agony of grief and despair. She was under a necessity however of suppressing her concern at present,

as

as she had no friend to whom she could communicate the real sentiments of her heart.

“ The case was, poor Barty, not having patience to attend the slow and silent growth of twenty *per cent.* in the ordinary way of trade, and being intimate with some of the younger part of Governor — —’s family, without consulting his father or mother, had applied, and got himself appointed a writer to the Honourable East India Company at Bengal: and having with much difficulty extorted his parents consent, was to set sail in the first ship destined to that remote region of the globe.”

Here Mr. Nonsuch laid down his cards to give Columella a friendly hint. “ Mr. Barty was in the right

of it," says he; "young people should go out into the world, and not loiter away their time in ease and indolence. The only way to enjoy an happy old age, is to make a good use of our time in our youth, as, I thank God, I have done." "Well, Papa, let Mr. Milward go on with his story," says Miss Leonora.

"Well," continued Columella, "Mrs. Arundel, ever since the death of her sons, was continually instilling into her daughter, as I before observed, sentiments of ambition and grandeur. A *title* of some kind was the least she now expected for Miss Arundel; though, as no one of higher rank applied, she at length vouchsafed to think of a neighbouring Baronet, of considerable fortune, but of

of no other merit than the inherent privilege of making his wife a lady, and giving her a small degree of rank and precedence in publick places.

“Sir Philip Martingale had known, though never taken any particular notice of Miss Arundel, till since the death of her brother. But having pretty constantly frequented the meetings at Newmarket, and other places of gambling resort, and by a life of dissipation and irregularity introduced a considerable derangement into his affairs, he began to think that such an additional fortune was rather a desirable object. Though he had kept up but a slight acquaintance therefore with Mr. Arundel, yet now he sent a servant

near

near ten miles to condole with the “*good family*” on this melancholy occasion; and sought every opportunity of cultivating a more intimate acquaintance with them.

“ Accordingly, during the hunting season, having contrived to run a fox within half a mile of Mr. Arundel’s house, he took that opportunity of repeating his enquiries after the health of the good family; and sent word that he would do himself the pleasure of waiting on them soon, and taking a family dinner with them. He received so obliging an answer from Mrs. Arundel (her husband being from home) that Sir Philip soon put his design into execution; and upon his observing that Miss Arundel was grown a fine young woman,

woman, Mrs. Arundel gave him very intelligible hints, that her daughter was to be disposed of, and that Sir Philip's addresses would not be disagreeable to *any part* of the family.

“ Upon his suggesting somewhat of the same kind however to Mr. Arundel (in whose eyes the idea of a Baronet's Lady had not so dazzling an appearance, especially when connected with the character of Sir Philip Martingale) Mr. Arundel, I say, told the Baronet, that as he had that only daughter, he was determined she should please herself in an affair so essential to her own happiness; but that as she had always shewn so great a deference to his and Mrs. Arundel's opinion, he would

would not influence her in her choice of a companion for life. He added, however, in Sir Philip's own style, that he was at liberty to beat up the cover, "though," says he, "I will not answer for your success."

C H A P. XXIX.

"AS this transaction fell out soon after Miss Arundel had received the last letter from young Barty; from the state of mind in which that letter had left her, you may guess what reception the Baronet met with, from a young lady of Miss Arundel's delicate sensibility. She told him at once, she had "no thoughts of changing her state at present;"

present ;" which, I believe, is the answer the sex has always ready on those occasions, when they dislike the person who makes the proposal, or have some more agreeable attachment, which for some reason or other they chuse to keep secret."

Here Miss Leonora gave Columella a rap with her fan : upon which he stopped short, and desired her to proceed with the narration ; which Miss Nonsuch, he said, knew better than himself, as she corresponded with a neighbour of Miss Arundel's, who, he presumed, made her acquainted with every minute particular of the transaction.

" Well then," says Miss Leonora, who with some reluctance had kept so long silence, " Miss Arundel was

so perpetually teased by her Mama to admit of Sir Philip Martingale's addresses, that she was forced at last to make a confidant of her father, who had always shewn his daughter more tenderness, or at least had treated her in a more rational manner, than her mother had done; had encouraged her to make a friend of him, and always listened with attention to whatever she had to plead for herself on every occasion.

" Miss Arundel, therefore, made no longer a secret to her father of her regard for young Barty, but told him ingenuously what had passed between them; the generosity with which he had behaved when her brothers were living; and, in short, the true reason of that romantic re-

solution which he had taken of leaving his friends and going to the Indies, in hopes of acquiring such a fortune as might raise him to an equality in that respect, with what she found her mother had made an indispensable qualification for the person who was to be her partner for life.

“ She hoped therefore her dear father would not force her to act so ungenerously by Mr. Barty, as to enter into any other engagements at present, but give her leave to wait a few years for the event of his undertaking; after which she would listen with a dutiful acquiescence to any other proposal they should think proper to make her.

“ Mr. Arundel was a little surprised

prised at this declaration, and attempted to dissuade his daughter from indulging so romantic an attachment to a young man, whom, though deserving enough in himself, yet as the family had formerly slighted their alliance, her mother (he was afraid) would never be brought to approve of. He added, however, as he himself was not over-fond of Sir Philip Martingale's character, she should be entirely at liberty to admit or reject his addresses, as she found agreeable to her own inclinations.

“ In short, Sir Philip finding little encouragement to persevere, and having started other game (to use his own phrase) quitted the chace; and in a few months was married to a citizen's daughter, of a fortune al-

most equal to Miss Arundel's, tho' greatly inferior to her in person, sense, and every other accomplishment.

C H A P. XXX.

“ **A**S Mr. Barty's family received so cool a reception from Mr. and Mrs. Arundel the preceding summer, they did not come down the following season to their own house; but Mrs. Barty dragged her husband (much against his will) down to Tunbridge; so that Miss Arundel had no opportunity of getting any certain intelligence of her friend young Barty. A neighbouring gentleman, however, who had

spent

H

spent a month in town, in the spring, informed them, by way of news, " that he had embarked in February on board an East Indiaman, and was gone as a writer to Bengal : that old Barty, when he found it in vain to oppose his son's resolution, had fitted him out, to a very considerable amount, with every article of traffic, which, from his own skill in trade, he knew would turn to the best account ; and that the young man himself, being very sensible, and quite master of every branch of science which could be of use to him in that situation, it was not doubted but that he would soon make a very large fortune.

It was near the end of the year when Miss Arundel (by means of

a friend of young Barty's in London, whom he had made a confidant) received an hasty letter from him, dated at the Cape of Good Hope, in which he repeated his vows of eternal constancy; and said, that nothing but the idea of Miss Arundel, and the hopes which she had given him of an inviolable friendship, could support him in her absence. He then gave her directions how to convey a letter to him, if she should condescend to favour him with a single line; which would be the greatest happiness he could enjoy, at the distance of five thousand leagues from all that was dear to him in this world.

"I need not mention to part of this company," continued Miss Non-

such, “ the extraordinary success which young Barty met with in the Indies. It is generally thought, I believe, that they make an hundred *per cent.* of what they carry out with them. And the governor finding Mr. Barty, from having been so early conversant with business, so much more dexterous in those matters than the generality of those raw young gentlemen sent over, especially by his knowledge of the Persian language, in which he soon perfected himself, he employed him in affairs of the greatest consequence; which threw him into many advantageous branches of traffic, that he could not otherwise have hoped for.

“ But young Barty was particularly useful to the Governor and Com-

pany, in transacting a delicate affair between the Rajah or King of T—, and the Nabob of A—, which he managed with so much judgment and impartiality, that he gained great advantages to the Company; and so far ingratiated himself, by his address, with both parties, that they presented him with considerable sums of money; besides a pair of brilliant diamonds of immense value, and some other precious stones, which the Rajah of T— insisted upon his accepting. so that in about six years young Barty had made a large fortune: and as he knew his father had already realized above twenty thousand pounds, he flattered himself, that the obstacle to his wishes in respect

respect of fortune, would now be removed in the eyes of Miss Arundel's friends ; and he began to think of returning to his native country.

C H A P. XXXI.

“ **Y**OUNG Mr. Barty and Miss Arundel had carried on an *annual* correspondence ever since he went abroad ; at least, he had hitherto written every year to Miss Arundel, who had always returned a short answer, acknowledging the receipt of his letters, and assuring him of her best wishes for his success. But the last ships that came from India, had not brought her the expected letter, which could not but alarm

a young lady of Miss Arundel's sensibility; neither could she get any intelligence of the Barty family the whole winter, as none of their country acquaintance had been in London. But as Mr. and Mrs. Arundel went to town in the spring, the first news they heard was, that young Barty was upon the point of marriage with the Governor of ——'s only daughter; who was sole presumptive heiress to above an hundred thousand pounds.

“ The probability of such an event, confirmed by the sudden intermission of Barty's correspondence, was a fatal stroke to Miss Arundel. Her father, who, as was mentioned, knew his daughter's secret intentions (tho' the reverence she bore him had prevented

vented her from communicating to him all the particulars of their correspondence) Mr. Arundel, I say, with great tenderness and a paternal compassion condoled with his beloved girl on this intelligence. But Mrs. Arundel, who also was convinced of her private attachment to young Barty, with great indelicacy triumphed over her on this mortifying occasion ; and hoped she had now enough of this mercenary, mercantile family ; and that she would now listen to proposals more worthy her birth and fortune.

“ For you may suppose, that so fine a young woman as Miss Arundel, with so considerable a fortune, could not remain unmarried for five or six

eds

K 5

years,

years, without many advantageous offers; which she had constantly rejected, with the connivance and permission of her father; but not without the displeasure of her ambitious mother, who was continually teasing Miss Arundel to listen to every proposal which flattered her own ideas of pride and grandeur.

C H A P. XXXII.

"THE summer was now almost past, and several ships from India had come in; yet no letter arrived for Miss Arundel. But as young Party had remitted very considerable sums to his father, and as it was said had embarked on board

the

the Elizabeth Indiaman, with the Governor and his daughter, a report strongly prevailed, that he either was married, or was to be married as soon as they arrived in England.

" Mr. Arundel, therefore, now thought it a proper time to use his influence over his daughter, and to persuade her to accept of a very eligible match, as she had sacrificed sufficiently to friendship and constancy, and there was the greatest probability that the object of her affections had proved unfaithful to his engagements.

" Miss Arundel, however, only begged to wait his arrival in England, that she might not give her lover any plea for his inconstancy by her own example, whether he were

or were not yet married; and that she would then endeavour to bring herself to a compliance with her father's and mother's expectations.

"After waiting the usual time however, for the arrival of the ships from Bengal, no intelligence could be gained of the good ship Elizabeth; neither had she been heard of at any of the ports where the India ships usually put in for water or provisions; and it was not doubted but that she had foundered at sea, and was lost.

C H A P. XXXIII.

" **A**LMOST another year was now elapsed, yet to the surprise and grief of every one concerned, no news was heard of the Elizabeth; so that the insurance on her rose to fifty *per cent.* and many families, particularly Mr. Barty's, were in the deepest affliction for the loss of their friends; and Miss Arundel shewed how sincere an affection she bore for young Barty, by grieving more for his death than for his supposed infidelity. She had now, however, no reasonable pretence for opposing any longer her father's importunate request to admit the addresses

dresses of Lord A—— B——, a nobleman of a very amiable character, as well as the presumptive heir to an Earldom, if his elder brother, who was far advanced in life, should die unmarried.

“ Miss Arundel had no objection to this nobleman’s person or character, except his being near twenty years older than herself; but she could not suddenly transfer her affections to a stranger, from a person on whom they had so long been fixed as their true and proper object. After some months struggle, however, with her rebellious heart, she had almost brought herself to submit to her father’s gentle solicitations, rather than to her mother’s peremptory commands: but then again

again she accused herself of injustice to her much-loved lamented friend, who possibly might be yet alive, and by some strange accident or other prevented from writing to her, and acquainting her with his situation, and respecting the vows which he had so often made her.

“ But a whole year having now elapsed, as I said before, and the usual time of the ships coming in being again long since past, Miss Arundel was ashamed any longer to resist her father’s solicitations, who had treated her with so much generosity, or to trifle with a person of Lord A—— B——’s consequence. She therefore, with an aching heart, and a thousand anxious thoughts, gave her father leave to fix a distant

day

day for the nuptials, though she had always given his Lordship a very cold reception, and could never be prevailed upon to be left alone with him above a few minutes, notwithstanding the kind expostulations of her father, and the stern commands of her mother on that head.

" In the mean time, she wrote the following generous letter, to be delivered by his friend to young Barty, if ever he should return to England.

" SIR,

" After waiting so many years
" for an uncertain event, and the
" many slights which you have un-
" deservedly received from my fa-
" mily, I cannot blame you for ac-
" cepting of so advantageous an offer

" as

“ as I find you have met with :
“ yet I should not consider your in-
“ constancy as any excuse for my
“ own ; neither should mountains of
“ gold, or the most splendid titles,
“ have ever tempted me to violate
“ the promise which I had made
“ to you.

“ But, as I find the happiness of
“ my dear parents depends upon
“ seeing me settled in the world to
“ their satisfaction, I have deter-
“ mined to give my hand, where
“ it is impossible to give an heart
“ which has been so long in the
“ possession of another.

“ I am, Sir, even yet,
“ your faithful friend,
“ and humble servant,
“ JULIA ARUNDEL.”

“ Miss

“ Miss Arundel was very silly,” cries Mrs. Sacharissa from the card-table, “ to write such a letter to a man, who she had all the reason in the world to believe had jilted her.” “ I don’t know,” says Hortensius; “ perhaps she shewed more dignity in despising than resenting such a breach of honour—But let Miss Leonora go on with her tale.”

“ Well,” continued Miss Non-such, “ the day now approached, and it was within a week of the time which Mr. Arundel had appointed for solemnizing his daughter’s marriage with Lord A—— B——, and they were in London to make preparations for the ceremony, when, to the agreeable surprize of every one, the Elizabeth Indiaman, above

a year

a year after her due time, arrived at Plymouth.

" The case was, they had had an epidemical sickness on board soon after they sailed from Bengal, and so many hands were down, that they had not enough in health to work the ship: so that they were forced to drive down to an unfrequented part of the coast of Africa; and by losing the trade-winds, and meeting with no European vessel, they could get no assistance, nor convey any intelligence to the East-India Company of their distressed situation.

" Soon after they came on shore, young Party set out post for London, to pay his duty to his father and mother, and to enquire after Miss Arundel, from whom he had received

ceived no letters the last two years, which a little alarmed his apprehensions; and when he came to town, to his utter confusion, the first news he heard from his father was, that Miss Arundel was upon the verge of matrimony with Lord A——B——; and that the family was in London for that purpose.

“ As his father had heard of the offer made young Barty by the Governor of Bengal, and had written to him, by all means not to refuse so advantageous a proposal; and in order to strengthen his arguments had hinted the probability of Miss Arundel’s accepting some of the great matches which were proposed to her; young Barty flattered himself, that this report also might be only an artful

artful suggestion of the old gentleman's with the same view. He determined, therefore, to go immediately to his confidant to get more certain information; but when he came thither, he also mentioned likewise the report of such an affair being in agitation, and at the same time gave him Miss Arundel's letter; which too strongly confirmed the fatal intelligence.

"Mr. Barty's friend, however, as some excuse for Miss Arundel's supposed infidelity, told him, that perhaps she had taken advantage of his long silence; and expressed his surprise that he had not written to her the last year or two, as usual; and added, that Miss Arundel, for that reason, had sufficient cause to be-

lieve

lieve the report of his intended marriage with the Governor of Bengal's daughter.

" Barty testified the utmost astonishment at his friend's expostulation with him for not writing; and declared, he had never failed doing it by every conveyance, as usual, till the very time that they set sail for Europe. And as for the Governor's daughter, he never had the least thoughts of marrying her, tho' it had been proposed to him; and added, that not all the wealth contained in the mines of Golconda, should bribe him to prove false to Miss Arundel, whilst she continued constant in her affection for him.

" He then added, that he would go immediately and throw himself

over

at

at Miss Arundel's feet, and receive his doom from her own mouth, before he would believe her capable of violating the solemn engagements which she had entered into with him.

" As soon therefore as he had properly equipped himself, he set out for Bond-street; where he knew, from Miss Arundel's letters, that they usually lodged when in town; but as he went along, he reflected that it might be more adviseable to call at some shop or public-house in the neighbourhood, and endeavour to get some previous intelligence in what situation matters at present really were.

" Accordingly, as the weather was rather showery, he wrapt himself in

his great coat, and went into the nearest pot-house to their lodgings; where, by good luck, amongst the company that were drinking there, Mr. Arundel's coachman was pointed out to him. From this man he learned, by way of chat, that Miss Arundel was very ill, and confined to her bed; and that they had hardly any hopes of her life.

“ The perplexity, it seems, into which she was thrown by the struggle between her duty to her parents, and the reluctance which she felt in marrying Lord A—— B——, had brought on a nervous fever; and the preparations for the nuptials were at present suspended.

“ This intelligence, tho' probably aggravated according to custom, yet
aid

greatly alarmed young Barty. He could hardly forbear going immediately to the house, to be better informed of the state of Miss Arundel's disorder: but he feared the surprise of his arrival might too much affect her in her weak condition; yet he could not bear to lose a moment in so critical a situation of affairs.

"However, as he had learned from an hint in one of Miss Arundel's letters, that her father was no stranger to, and rather favoured his pretensions, he at last resolved to go to the door, wrapt up as he was, and enquire for Mr. Arundel; who probably, after so long an absence, and the great alteration which se-

ven years, and the different climate, had made in his person, would not recollect him; and by that means, he might endeavour to discover what he wanted to know, and what he had to hope for.

In short, without further deliberation, he went immediately to the door, and upon enquiring for Mr. Arundel, was received by him alone in the fore-parlour. Mr. Arundel desiring to know his commands, he said he had business with him from Mr. Barty. "Mr. Barty!" replies Mr. Arundel, with a reserved air, which a little discomposed our Nabob, "what Mr. Barty? the Russia merchant?" "No, Sir," replied he; "from young Barty his son."

"Why,"

“ Why,” says Mr. Arundel, “ is young Mr. Barty living, and returned to England ?” “ Yes, Sir ; the ship arrived two days ago at Plymouth.”

“ Well, Sir,” says Mr. Arundel, “ is Mr. Barty married to the governor’s daughter, as was reported ?” “ No, Sir ; there is but one lady in the world that Mr. Barty will ever marry ; and if *she* be disposed of already, he will think himself the most unfortunate of mankind.

“ In short, Sir,” continued young Barty, “ he has made *me* a confidant of his love and invariable regard for Miss Arundel ; but was so unhappy, on his arrival in England, to hear that she was otherwise engaged ; and, what I am sure will give him still

more uneasiness, I have this moment heard that Miss Arundel is dangerously ill."

" By this time Mr. Arundel began to recollect the voice, and even the features of young Mr. Barty; though from being a very slender and fair youth, he was now become a very jolly, tho' rather a swarthy young man.

" After expressing his surprise, and congratulating him on his safe return, Mr. Arundel said, he would tell him ingenuously the present situation of their affairs, and the whole progress of their conduct in regard to Miss Arundel.

" The same motive," continues he, " which prevailed on your fa-
ther

ther to reject my proposal, when the superiority of fortune was on your side, would naturally operate with us when our daughter became the sole heiress to a fortune which made her, in that respect, a match for any one. Accordingly, as women are fond of parade and shew, and often prefer the appearance of happiness to the reality of it, my wife was bent upon marrying her daughter to a person of quality and title, whatever were the consequence.

“ But, as I have always thought there was a better chance for happiness in the middle ranks of life, I would have wished rather to marry my daughter to a person, who was in a way to increase his fortune by

industry in some genteel profession, than to one who had nothing to do but to spend his income in luxury and dissipation; and when my daughter, whom I have always treated as a friend, made me her confidant in regard to the mutual affection which I find has long subsisted between you, I assure you, Sir, upon the word of a gentleman, I wished for nothing so much as your return, in health, and with a competent fortune.

“ But when the report prevailed, confirmed by so many concurrent circumstances, of your being engaged to the governor’s daughter, I own, Sir, as the great object of my life now was to see my daughter settled, and to keep up a family, I urged

urged her to comply with what I thought a very desirable offer; but the poor dear girl has, I am afraid, suffered so much from the struggle between her duty to her parents and her affection for you, that I do not know the consequence. I have however put an entire stop to the proposed match, which I find has given her so much uneasiness; and if you give me leave, Sir, I will take the first opportunity of mentioning your return, and the continuance of your attachment to her; which agreeable intelligence will, I hope, by the blessing of God, contribute greatly to her speedy recovery."

"Mr. Barty therefore, after the

warmest acknowledgements of Mr. Arundel's kind intentions, took his leave for the present, to wait with patience for Miss Arundel's recovery. He was kept three days however in the most anxious suspense, before he received a card from Mr. Arundel, to beg his attendance in Bond-street about twelve o'clock; which summons, you may suppose, he most punctually obeyed.

C H A P. XXXIV.

“WHEN Mr. Barty came to Mr. Arundel’s, he found him alone again in the fore-parlour; where after informing him that his daughter was surprisingly recovered, Mr. Arundel said, “he had expected to meet with some opposition from his wife on this occasion, but had the pleasure to find her come very readily into his own measures, having been so greatly alarmed by the danger her daughter had already been in, from the conflict between her duty and her love.” This was all he thought necessary to acquaint Mr. Barty with; though Mrs. Arundel

L 5 had

had now also discovered to Mr. Arundel, another motive for her acquiescence; which was, a report she herself had heard (on good authority) some time since, that the Earl of —, Lord A—— B——'s elder brother, was himself upon the brink of marriage with an heiress of immense fortune.

“ Mr. Arundel however added, for young Barty's further satisfaction, that as he had always treated with Lord A—— B—— upon the conditional terms of leaving his daughter always at liberty to pursue her own inclinations, and her attachment to Mr. Barty had for some time been publicly known, his arrival in England and renewing his addresses

addresses would effectually put a stop to all other pretensions; in short, he told him, that his wife was with her daughter in the next room, and prepared to receive him.

“An interview of this kind,” said Miss Leonora, “between two fond lovers, after seven years absence, is beyond my powers of description; and must be left to the imagination. And indeed, I have always thought it a kind of indelicacy, if not a profanation, to unveil the mysteries of so delicate a passion; at least I could never read, without blushing to myself, the many rapturous expressions which one meets with in romances on these occasions.”

“Come, come,” says Atticus, laying his hand with a smile upon

Miss Leonora's, "you'll discover too much consciousness, and your own delicate feelings, by these ingenious comments upon your tale."

"Well," says Miss Leonora, blushing, "I shall only add, that as Miss Arundel found Mr. Barty rather improved in his person, his complexion having received a rich bronze from the climate, and the vernal beauties of youth being grown to maturity, and heightened by a manly grace; so Barty was agreeably surprised to see Miss Arundel's charms so far from being diminished by a few years, or even by her late illness, that from a mere well-grown girl, she was now improved into a graceful person, and a fine woman.

"After

“ After the warmest expressions of mutual congratulation and reciprocal fondness, Mr. Barty pulled out a little shagreen case, and presented Miss Arundel with a sapphire of very great value, which was given him by the Rajah of T——, and which he said he had constantly carried about him from that time; though he took no other pleasure in it, than from the hopes that Miss Arundel would accept of it, as a pledge that she was never out of his thoughts.

“ When the two lovers came to adjust their respective complaints, it was soon discovered, that young Barty’s *apparent* neglect in writing to Miss Arundel, was owing to his father’s

father's having discovered by what channel he corresponded with her, and intercepting his letters, when he heard the advantageous offer which had been made his son, of the Governor of Bengal's daughter. And on the other hand, young Barty had the pleasure to find that a report of that kind, corroborated by so many plausible circumstances, had alone determined Miss Arundel to admit, tho' with great reluctance, of Lord A—— B——'s addresses; as Mr. Arundel had already informed him.

“ As for young Barty's father, he was easily satisfied of the propriety of his son's conduct in refusing the governor's daughter; for tho' her fortune

fortune would really have been very large, and she was not void of other attractions, yet having been bred up in Asiatic luxury, and in almost regal splendor, Miss Arundel with above sixty thousand pounds would, in a *prudential* view, be a much better match than Miss ——— with an hundred thousand.

“ In short, not to be more tedious, all things were soon adjusted; and I need not repeat, that Miss Arundel was married to Mr. Barty last week; and they say, that to please old Mrs. Arundel, young Barty is to purchase a Baronet’s title, and make his wife a Lady, which the mother thinks essential to her daughter’s felicity.”

C H A P.

C H A P. XXXV.

WHEN Miss Leonora Nonsuch had finished her story, Mr. Nonsuch called out from the card-table, “There now, Mr. Milward, was not this better than for a young man to sit at home all his life, and do nothing? *I always thought* young Barty’s *industry* would be rewarded.”

“ Miss Arundel’s *constancy*, you mean, Papa,” cries Miss Leonora. “ *Constancy!*” says Aunt Sacharissa; “ a fiddlestick! I think old Barty was a fool to let an only son embark in so wild a project; and Mr. Arundel very silly to encourage his daughter

daughter in so romantic a resolution ; but my brother always judges by the *event*, and so is *always* on the *right* side of the question."

" Come, come," replies he, " all's well that ends well ;" and now our pool is at an end, it is time for us to move towards Porto Bello (so Mr. Nonsuch called his country-house) where," says he, " I hope we shall have the pleasure of waiting on these gentlemen and Mr. Milward. We can shew them something perhaps that will entertain them, tho' we do not aspire to the exquisite taste of Mr. Milward." He then pressed him to name a day, when he and his friends would eat a bit of mutton with him.

Columella

Columella said, he had fixed upon to-morrow to shew his friends a neighbouring seat or two; but the day following would shew them the way to Mr. Non such's house, if that were convenient to him.

C H A P. XXXVI.

WHEN the company was gone, Hortensius broke out with a sarcastical smile, "then she would talk! Good Gods! how she would talk!" "What, you mean Miss Leonora Non such?" says Atticus; "well, but she *talks* to the purpose however, and quite eclipses her silent sister at least, Miss Matilda, who

who “ fits like Patience on a monument,” and never speaks a word.”

“ I don’t desire a woman to *talk* well,” replies Hortensius, “ if she does but *think* well; and that I am sure Miss Matilda Nonsuch discovers by her expressive countenance; and I dare say has more sense than her romantic sister. I don’t want a woman to say brilliant things, if she never says a foolish one.”

“ So! so!” says Columella, “ I fancy these young ladies have each made a conquest; one of a lawyer, and the other of a divine. But Miss Leonora has one excellence, which you are yet strangers to.” “ What is that?” cries Atticus. “ Why,” says Columella, “ she has a very pretty *genius*

genius for poetry, and writes verses as fast as a conjurer can spew ribbons."—"Oh! for heaven's sake, Columella, hold your abusive tongue," says Atticus, "that is the very worst thing which has been said yet of Miss Leonora; besides, to call a knack at rhyming a poetical genius (suppose the young lady does amuse herself in that way) is an abominable abuse of words." "Well, but what do you think of Aunt Sacharissa?" says Columella to Hortensius. "Why," replies Hortensius, "I should like her very well for an Aunt, I assure you, if I could but have her niece Miss Matilda for a wife."

Their conversation was now interrupted

terrupted by the entrance of Mrs. Betty, who came with her hands full of china and glasses to the beaufet, and gave Columella an oblique glance, which attracted the notice of Hortensius. Having adjusted her crockery ware, she officiously stooped down to pick up some crumbs of bread and butter, which had been dropped on the floor; but so small, that they would have eluded the searching eye of a Robin-redbreast. Mrs. Betty however muttering to herself, said those young ladies gave more trouble than any body that came to the house; and observed how terribly they had greased the floor, which the house-maid had *scoured upon her knees*

knees that very morning. "Upon her knees!" said Columella, "why that is the easiest way of doing it. But, come, come, don't trouble the company with your housewifery." Mrs. Betty then moved off with a look of dissatisfaction at her master, which a little alarmed his two friends, though they did not take the liberty at present to mention the suspicions which arose in their minds upon this occasion.

Here the Canon was again interrupted in his tale, by the sudden stopping of the coach at the inn at Marlborough; where to our mortification we were to dine (or pay for a dinner without dining) at twelve o'clock. We had something in a tureen called

soup, compared to which, the miscellaneous contents of an hog-tub were a simple repast; and the Kentish 'Squire cutting up one of the fowls out of curiosity, he found it so green, and in such a putrid state, that he called in the landlord to answer for the affront. My landlord begged ten thousand pardons; but said it was a mistake of his cook's, those fowls being intended for the Bristol machine. "Impudent puppy!" says the Canon. "Though for that matter, gentlemen," adds he, "the fowls are eatable; and a gentleman just arrived from making the tour of France, who dined here but yesterday, assured me they eat them much higher at Paris."

As

As none of us were ambitious of eating in the French taste however, we desired my landlord to keep his fowls till his travelled customer returned from Bath ; and having soon after paid our bill, we proceeded in our journey, and the Canon in his tale.



END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

